The UNESCO Courier

A window open on the world

April 1968
(21st year)
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LITERACY

Stairway to development

Appeal

Addressed to Unesco's Member States
by the International Consultative Liaison Committee
for Literacy

The urgency and vital importance of one of the essential tasks of our age—elimination of the gap between the have and the have-not countries—are daily becoming increasingly apparent throughout the world. It is also tragically obvious that one thousand million adults can neither contribute effectively to nor profit fully from development. It is for our generation—the generation of the twentieth century—to carry out this gigantic and vital task, the historic significance of which will certainly be made abundantly clear during the celebration of Human Rights Year.

The World Congress of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy, held in Teheran from 8 to 19 September 1965, agreed that the scourge of illiteracy affected all mankind, violated the dignity of man, impeded development and was an obstacle to international understanding. It strongly emphasized the decisive importance, for the eradication of illiteracy, of international solidarity and co-operation.

Although the tragic disproportion between the resources needed for this task and those available has only been further confirmed since the Teheran Congress, some grounds for hope have none the less emerged.

The appeals of the supreme spiritual and moral leaders of the international community, the determination of many governments to devote great efforts to the cause of literacy, the visible signs of international solidarity, that sacred duty which this task imposes upon all countries, and the encouraging start to Unesco's World Literacy Programme—all these things open up new prospects and inspire confidence and hope.

On behalf of Unesco's International Consultative Liaison Committee for Literacy, I solemnly invite the governments of Member States of Unesco to follow the example of those States which have already made voluntary contributions to Unesco's Special Account for literacy work and to appeal to public opinion in their countries with a view to fostering and encouraging action by public and private organizations to increase that contribution.

The committee believes that the time is now ripe for the launching of a vast movement of international solidarity that will contribute decisively to the eradication of illiteracy throughout the world and will make it possible in the wake of the great democratic gains of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to ensure access to education for all men.

The committee is sure that all governments will wish to contribute to the success of an entreprise of such capital importance for human dignity and progress.

Paris, 7 September 1967

Ashraf Pahlavi
Chairman of the International
Consultative Liaison Committee
for Literacy

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Editorial Offices
Unesco, Place de Fontenoy, Paris 7e, France

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Sandy Koffler

Assistant Editor-in-Chief
René Caloz

Assistant to the Editor-in-Chief
Lucio Attinelli

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Research and Illustrations: Olga Rödel

Layout and Design : Robert Jacquemin

All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief in Paris

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In this issue the "Unesco Courier" reviews recent developments in the struggle against illiteracy, the progress achieved to date and the enormous problems that still remain to be overcome in many parts of the world. Unesco's Director-General recently denounced: "the shortcomings of a world in which there are a thousand million illiterates or semi-illiterates . . . The struggle against an evil of such proportions must be carried on co-operatively by the whole of mankind."

OUTSIDE THE WRITTEN WORD

by Fernando Valderrama

Photo © Holmes-Lebel, Paris - Claude Jacoby

In the market-place of a small Brazilian town, a bookseller, microphone in hand, reads to an attentive group of townsfolk. Most of them, young as well as old, are illiterate. Everyone pays to hear the stories read. There are more than 700 million persons in the world whose only access to knowledge is through the spoken word.

The word "illiterate" has become synonymous with "ignorant" in common speech and even, sometimes, has a derogatory sense; but most illiterates are in no way ashamed of their situation. Being illiterate, they are not conscious of it, nor of what it means to someone who is not. That is why few feel any need to change.

According to certain surveys, 60 and even 70 per cent of illiterates have no wish to learn to read, and yet in some countries the illiterate is not a full citizen and has no right to vote. He is considered as living on the fringe of society.

Illiteracy has come to be regarded as a sickness or plague and we have reached the point where illiterates almost appear to belong to a hostile group which must be wiped out. This is shown by the extensive military terminology now used in connexion with illiteracy. We speak of "campaign" and "fight" against illiteracy; of "strategy" and a "mass attack"; "liquidating" or "eliminating" illiteracy and of making the final "assault".

Presented in this way, the illiterate bears more resemblance to a hunted animal than a human being who should be helped to better himself and become more useful to society. It might be wiser to abolish these negative expressions and to replace them by others with a more positive and optimistic connotation.

A new idea is beginning slowly to spread—that of the "society outside the written word." According to this notion, isolated social groups are illiterate because they live "outside the written word", and not because they are ignorant.

The illiterate is not ignorant. In the first place, all adults have some practical experience of life, especially the older ones who have had to look for work, to feed a family and to assume responsibilities however small.

A good example is the adult illiterate's understanding of arithmetic. When a child begins to learn arithmetic, he can hardly count to ten without

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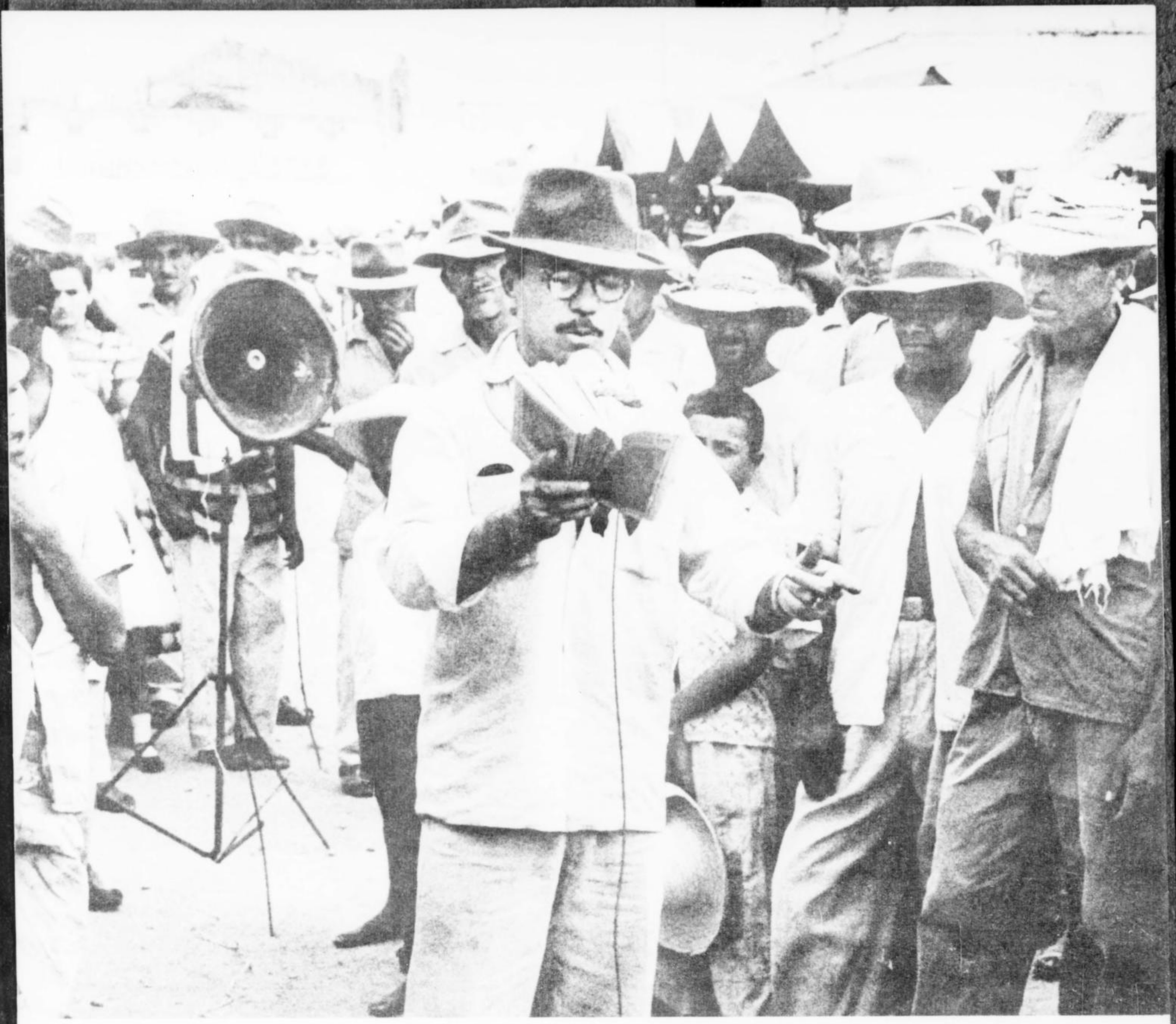
FERNANDO VALDERRAMA, *of Unesco's Literacy Division, was for 20 years principal adviser on education in northern Morocco. Born in Spain, he is an authority on Islam, and was professor of sociology in this field at the University of Madrid and professor of Arabic at the School of Higher Commercial Studies in Madrid. The author presented a longer study on this question to the 6th World Congress on Sociology, in Evian (France) in September 1966.*



making mistakes and even this succession of figures represents nothing concrete or practical to him.

At school he learns to count, to write figures, to do abstract sums and then to apply what he has learned through problems. Arithmetic, like other subjects, introduces him to a new, unknown world which gradually becomes familiar not only through his classes but through the fact of growing up.

For the illiterate adult, the question is quite different. He has no general culture; geography, history and science are part of another world. Yet he has perhaps sold, and certainly bought, a number of things. He has received money for his work and had to check that the sum was correct. Consequently he has used rudimentary methods to solve simple sums. He has made payments and been obliged to calculate first; he has made plans on the basis of money he owned or hoped to earn; he might have measured a piece of land.

In short, he has already lived "economic problems" and when he joins a literacy class, arithmetic is not new to him. True, he does not know written figures, but as soon as he learns to write 8, he will be able to give the figure its true practical value.

While he may be illiterate, he probably knows a trade; he is a farm labourer, blacksmith or carpenter and in his own field knows more than an educated person who is foreign to the trade.

On the other hand, he is generally distrustful of innovations and sceptical when faced with new or "foreign" ideas and skills, and he may well adopt this attitude towards literacy. His traditional way of life is familiar to him and has so far proved successful to a certain extent.

An old woman in a little village once said: "You think you have to teach us everything. If, as you say, we had eaten unhealthy food all this time, cultivated our fields wrongly and brought up our children against all the rules, we would all be dead by now. But as you can see, we are not."

The rural inhabitant, for whom tradition goes deeper, distrusts the city dweller. For him, superstitions often mixed with religious beliefs form a solid basis to social life and discourage change. If nothing exceptional occurs (like the opening up of a mine, the building of a road, the introduction of a new industry), life keeps on its monotonous way. But if change

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ALPHABET MATCHES

Right, even a matchbox can help to promote literacy. These are used as teaching aids in Ecuador. On each is the picture of an object, its name and the first letter of the name: "l" as in "luna" (moon); "e" as in "escoba" (broom); "s" as in "sapo" (frog) and so on. Left, a farm worker in Ecuador confirms the truth of the saying "never too old to learn". He has joined one of the classes of a functional literacy pilot project run for 16,000 adults in the Milagro area of Ecuador.
In all parts of the world, literacy campaigns are today reaching hundreds of thousands of adults who live "outside the written word."

Photo Unesco - Dominique Roger

Streets without a name cities as open books

occurs and the small farmer at last sees in it something of use to him and his family, his little rural society will have found a powerful motivation.

If the rural dweller learns to read, he has no written material on which to apply his learning. There are isolated villages where streets—when they exist—have no name and not a single signpost is to be found, not even at the entrance to the village. No newspapers reach them and the villagers lead a monotonous existence, bereft of hope or ambition.

If the city dweller learns to read he will find written material everywhere—in shop windows, on walls and posters; —the town itself is a wide open book where the new literate can continue his education.

In any country illiterates can be divided into four main groups:

■ Those who live in towns or urban centres and who, of necessity, are in contact with others to whom reading is commonplace (fellow workers in a factory, soldiers in the same regiment, etc.) These illiterates know the advantage of being able to read and write; they know that if they acquire this knowledge, their situation will improve, and so it is not difficult for them to make the necessary effort. Illiterates in this group hardly need any encouragement at all. They are already convinced and only wait for an opportunity to be offered to them.

■ A second group consists of illiterates living in an urban or rural area where a community development programme is being carried out or where an agricultural or industrial concern has just been established. Here they need to be stimulated, because for them the relationship between work and the value of knowing how to read and write has not yet been established.

In such a totally or largely illiterate community, the establishment of a development nucleus has created a new atmosphere which needs to be defined and evaluated frankly. It is up to the leaders of the new industry or business concern to weigh the advantages of having literate workers whose output is far higher than that of illiterate workers and to co-operate in helping them.

If these leaders act in good faith, it will not be difficult to shake off the long-standing inertia through intelligent and well-planned action and to show the workers the advantages they would gain from learning to read and write.

■ The third group consists of non-salaried farm workers who are paid in kind. Some countries have considerable numbers of these underprivileged workers in whose welfare their employers show no interest. Without sufficient administrative power, the authorities find it difficult to persuade employers to create an atmosphere conducive to the education and development of their workers. Given the facilities, however, this group could soon reach a more advanced stage in society and would be in a position to increase and improve production.

■ The last group of illiterates belong to isolated communities. They live in areas with no means of communication and where the written word is practically unknown. Here, any attempt at literacy teaching must be accompanied by a change in the economic and social structure. To shake off the centuries-old lethargy and to hold out

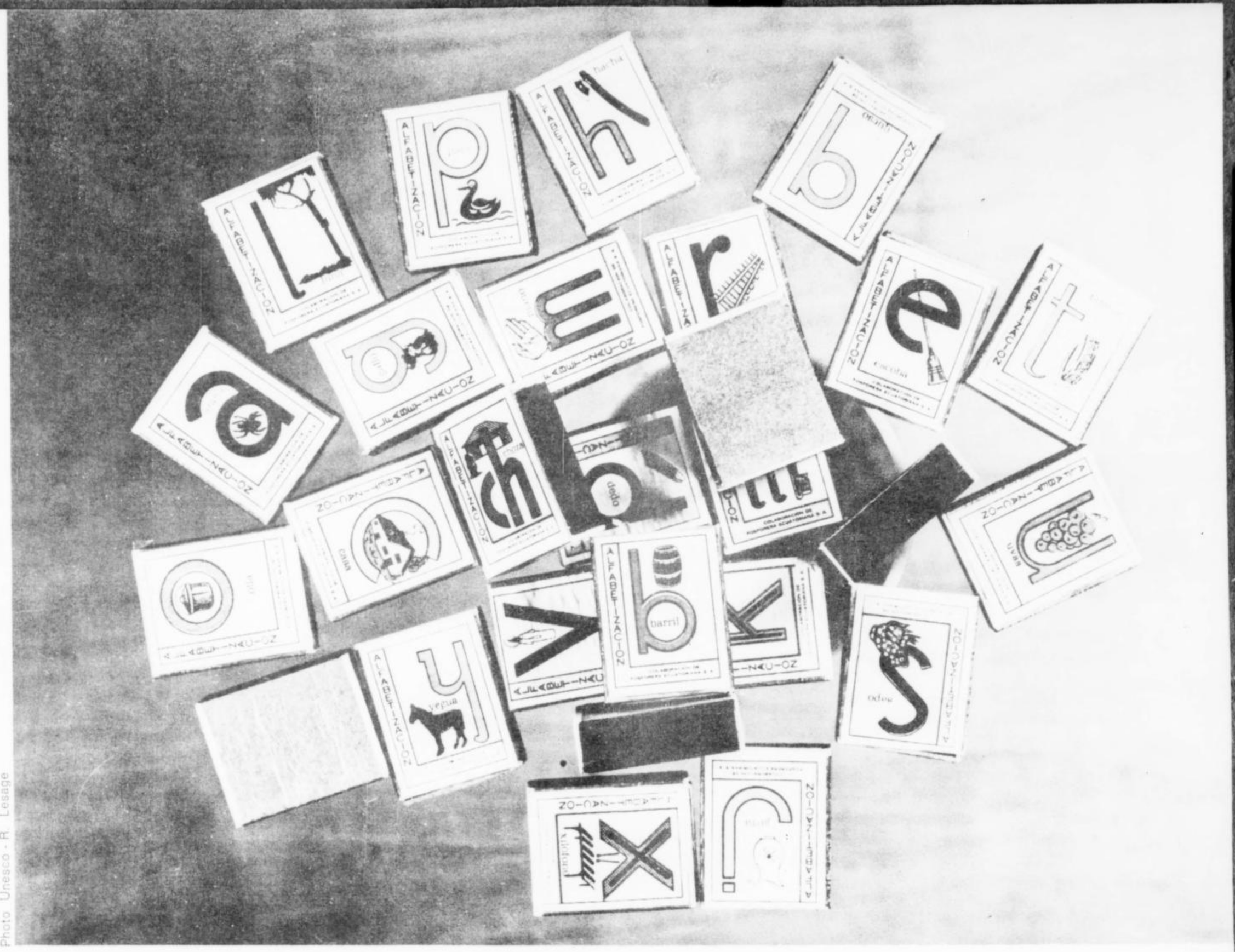

Photo Unesco - R. Lesage

to these people, the hope of a new life, new interests, motivation and stimulus have to be created. This is an extremely difficult task.

Though far from exhaustive, this classification could form the basis for the planning of a literacy programme. Those responsible would need to have sufficient information concerning the illiterates belonging to each group—their whereabouts number, sex and degree of illiteracy.

Top priority should be given to the first two groups. With inhabitants of towns and urban areas, the work of stimulation and motivation is so easy that literacy teaching can begin without any preliminary stage. Once the illiterates in these groups have learned to read they will make rapid strides, as towns are full of reading matter. Other courses should help them to improve their professional skills and thus to become competent workers capable of serving their own interests and those of their community.

The illiterates in the second group have been faced, perhaps for the first time, with a change in the structure of their society. It is this change which should be used as a starting point for motivation.

Prepared intelligently, the programme should be geared so as to best serve both personal and collective aims. The task is straightforward—work is available and jobs are offered according to applicants' qualifications. Those who can read and write obviously get the best jobs and the best pay.

The last groups are similar as regards their material and social life, but there is one essential difference between them. While one group depends on employers who, though fully aware of the value of reading and writing, do not help their workers to learn, the other has neither example nor guide.

However in both cases there is an obvious need to create new social structures, to produce economic changes which revive an apathetic society without incentive. All these factors must be considered.

To be effective any literacy programme must have clearly defined aims. It is because this study has been neglected that we still find in some countries a common curriculum for urban and rural schools, with no distinction made between regional and local characteristics.

In other cases, an incomplete rural school exists next to a complete urban school. In some schools of Asia and Africa where there is a shortage of textbooks adapted to the country, teachers use books written for Europeans where neither names, illustrations nor subjects have any connexion with local conditions. In adult education programmes, we have even seen teachers use books written for children because of lack of planning or money, and this has soon proved discouraging to adult students.

In isolated rural areas the three main problems of under-development—illiteracy, poverty and sickness—are so inter-related that it is difficult for the planner to decide on which to concentrate first. It is useless to concentrate on health, for example, while ignoring soil erosion which aggravates malnutrition and poverty—in themselves an unsurmountable obstacle to the improvement of health standards.

Similarly, it is useless to teach people to read and write without giving them a reason for learning and the

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Learning to read in order to read to learn

opportunity to use their newly acquired knowledge to improve their living conditions.

Nor can agricultural development be pursued if sickness and illiteracy keep the agricultural worker in a state of mental inertia.

Consequently what is called for is concerted action by specialists in the various fields to solve these problems simultaneously with a view to economic and social development since the success of literacy programmes is tied up with measures such as agrarian reform and the development of co-operatives and with many other factors of social, economic and cultural development to which are sometimes added political reasons, which should not be under-estimated.

Literacy training is not an end in itself but a means to an end, and as such should constitute an essential element of development and be planned in consequence, being adapted to each case and with clear and well defined aims in view. It must respond to needs.

THE day of literacy for literacy's sake is long past. It is therefore inadvisable to launch a literacy programme as an isolated project because the very absence of adequate planning on a broad scale and of foresight is bound to lead to failure.

It would also be absolutely wrong to undertake a mass literacy programme in a country which has not resolved, at the same time, to transform its social structure and its development plans; this would only lead to the raising of new hopes without providing the means of satisfying them. In this case, it would be preferable to concentrate the effort on limited sectors where development plans are already in operation or about to be undertaken. As a general rule, literacy should be included in all community development programmes (industrial, agricultural, housing, health, etc.)

This selective system of literacy training may not be appealing from a political point of view because it is not spectacular, but on the other hand it is realistic and positive and its results are more effective and lasting.

It soon becomes clear that while investment in primary education yields a long term return, investment in functional literacy work with adults gives a much quicker yield because of the age of the persons involved and of the rapid improvement in the quality of manpower.

Literacy can be an important step towards vocational training and play a fundamental role in changing the milieu. It opens the door to learning, and literate adults are thus better informed both as citizens and as producers.

It is obvious, therefore, that the selection of reading material is of primary importance. Not only must the content be related to the normal activities of the newly literate but the style, too, must be simple and attractive so as to develop a taste for reading.

Someone once said that in a literacy programme adults should begin by "learning to read" and finish by "reading to learn". This is the moment at which the adult chooses his own reading matter, either to increase his knowledge or for relaxation and enjoyment.

But not simply any book or newspaper is suitable for a person who has just learned to read. A gap exists between his elementary knowledge and the books or papers which might be the only things available for him to read. This gap must be filled by literature which is especially adapted to his level so that he can gradually progress towards more advanced texts.

This is one of the most important aspects of any adult education programme and the new literate's very future depends on the quality of the reading matter made available to him.

As we know, literacy is a complex problem. It is a matter of national concern and consequently a country has to be informed about it. There are technical and organizational details of which the public is generally unaware and regarding which some explanation is needed. The people need to be told the purpose of literacy training, the aims which the authorities hope to achieve thereby and the general and specific problems involved.

In preparing to "launch a campaign" it has been customary to prepare posters in which an allegorical illustration is accompanied by some catch phrase or slogan, but as these posters are directed at the illiterate who cannot read or understand them, they are perfectly useless. There is one sector of the public, however, which should be better informed—those in positions of responsibility, employers, directors, and all those most directly concerned with the development of their country. The role of the press and other mass media is thus of paramount importance.

IN countries where more than one language is in common use, it is up to the government to choose the language to be used in literacy training. However the various meetings and conferences so far devoted to literacy have been unanimous in recommending that the first stages of all literacy programmes should use the vernacular as a means of penetration, understanding and affinity.

Where a language does not exist in any written form, a different problem arises and special research has then to be undertaken to establish an alphabet and to determine appropriate linguistic rules.

Literacy teaching for adults calls for a varied and extensive teaching body —elementary schoolteachers, both active and retired; well educated non-professionals; technical experts in specific fields (agriculture, handicrafts, etc.), group leaders and discussion guides, operators for audio-visual equipment, etc., all of them either full or part time, paid or voluntary.

Most adult educationalists were trained to teach children, or lack pedagogical experience. In any case, they need special training to fit them for their new job. The community has to be studied as a whole so as to identify the many problems confronting adults, and literacy classes should be used as an opportunity to help people become aware of their problems and to cope with them.

Obviously, in speaking of adult education, the widest meaning is given to the word "education", taking in the concept of the complete development of the human being. We often use the expression "literacy tied to development" because it is in this sense that it has to be conceived if it is to prove useful and show positive results. But it should be made clear that this "development" is social as well as economic, cultural as well as moral.

Literacy within the context of adult education must be a means of integration in the total dynamics of human betterment.

A DOWN-TO-EARTH APPROACH TO LITERACY

A new strategy in the struggle against illiteracy has recently been adopted by Unesco and many countries to meet the growing challenge of economic development. Departing from past procedures of attempting to solve the problem of illiteracy on a world-wide scale, countries have adopted a more selective approach with crash-training programmes aimed at groups where incentive for literacy is high and the promise of results considerable. Here Mr. Acher Deleon, director of Unesco's literacy programme, replies to questions on these new experimental literacy projects which have now been launched in many parts of the world.

ACHER DELEON *has been director of Unesco's Department of Adult Education and Youth Activities since 1963. Former secretary of the Central Council of Yugoslav Trade Unions, Mr Deleon has been a member of Unesco's International Advisory Committee for Adult Education since 1953.*

QUESTION. — Can you tell us, Mr. Deleon, where we stand today in the struggle against illiteracy?

ANSWER. — In the last few years I think we have reached a turning point. Until recently countries the world over were mainly interested in investing in capital equipment or in the upper echelons represented by administrators and executives. Today, national policy-makers and in fact the whole international community want to try to tap their vast manpower potential. To justify literacy campaigns in the past the principles of human rights, ethics and justice were always invoked. But today when we speak of investing in education we think in terms of improved efficiency and productivity, in other words, economic development.

Q. — Does this mean that the ethical aspects of literacy and human rights are no longer important?

A. — By no means. But let us not forget that economic emancipation for a country is basic to human freedom.

Q. — What would you say are Unesco's recent achievements in literacy?

A. — In November 1964, Unesco's General Conference launched the first experimental programme for functional literacy. This programme, covering a period of five years, is both selective and intensive. Selective, because it operates in only a few countries and concentrates on priority economic and social areas. So you can see that this is an entirely new approach that differs sharply from the world-wide earlier campaigns. It is intensive because it operates in depth and is no longer exclusively educational in character but also aims at improving productivity, the adaptability of a country's labour force and indeed the whole labour market.

A functional literacy programme is directly tied to a country's economic priorities, and literacy efforts are pinpointed in areas of other heavy investments. This is done advisedly as

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Photo Unesco - Marc Riboud

Photo Shell

Photo © Paul Almasy

DIAMOND HUNTERS ON THE MIGHTY ORINOCO

"I know all the earth doth not yield the like confluence of streams and branches, the one crossing the other as many times, and all as fair and large and so like one another as no man can tell which to take." So Sir Walter Raleigh described the huge delta of the Orinoco which he visited on his search for El Dorado in 1595. The mighty Orinoco, one of the longest rivers of South America winds west, north and east across the centre of Venezuela before entering the Atlantic through its many-channelled fan-shaped delta nearly as large as Sicily. In this vast area the Venezuelan government is now engaged in a gigantic programme to develop its rich mining and forestry resources as well as its hydro-electric potential, and with Unesco's co-operation has undertaken a programme of literacy and training to raise the educational and technical level of its manpower. Above, diamond prospectors on the banks of the Caroni, an affluent of the Orinoco, who are participating in the Unesco experimental literacy programme. Right, intake system at the Guri hydro-electric project on the same river being built with World Bank funds. Left, street scene in Caracas, Venezuela's capital (1,200,000 inhabitants), one of the world most rapidly developing cities where slums are fast disappearing before soaring skyscrapers.

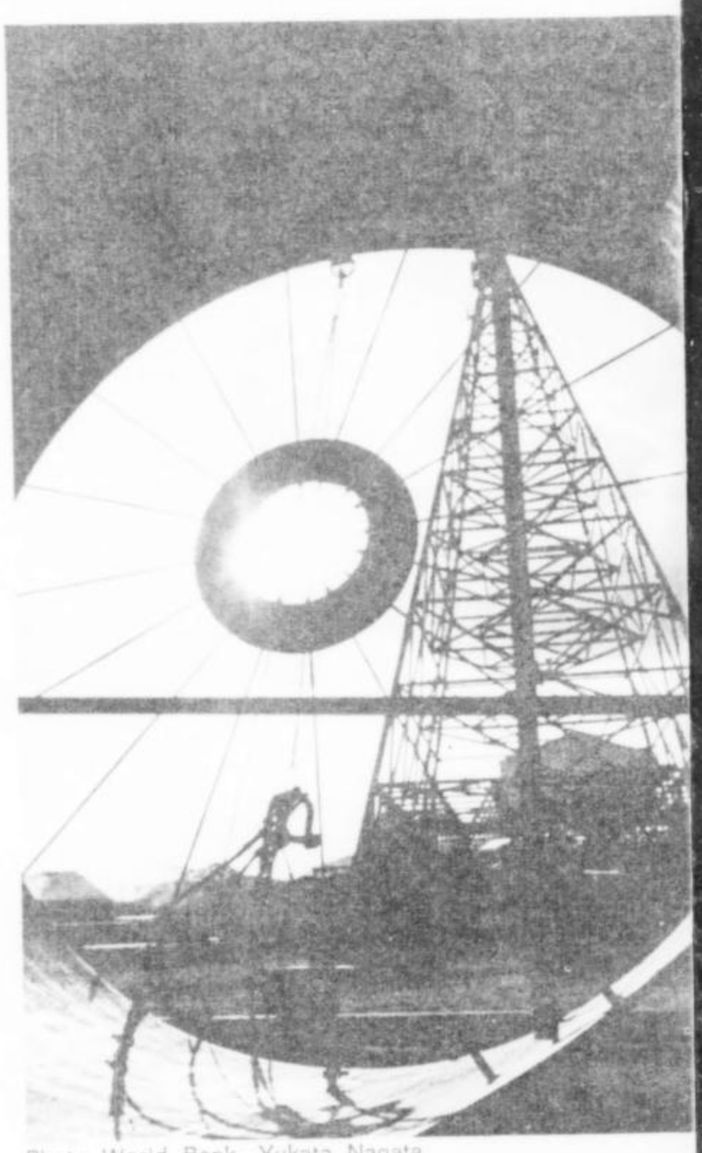

Photo World Bank - Yukata Nagata

For the first time development funds for literacy

a means of speeding development of the country as a whole.

Areas chosen for experimental projects are not representative of average conditions in a country. A functional literacy project is by definition always a selective project.

I think I ought to make clear at this point that we still do not know the exact correlation between literacy and development. That is why we attach so much importance to the evaluation of our results. Once it is proved such a correlation actually exists, the next step will be to determine precisely what effect literacy actually has on a nation's economy in such domains as agriculture, handcrafts, industry, trade, etc.

Another objective of our projects is to see to what extent literacy can help to promote a more diversified economy.

Q. — Does this mean that no two functional literacy programmes are alike?

A. — Precisely. Each project is conceived in terms of local conditions within the framework of overall development needs and specific requirements for skilled labour. At the same time, action is clearly called for when a development programme is hampered by illiteracy. In other words, literacy is not an end in itself, since it is not merely a matter of teaching adults reading, writing and arithmetic but a means of enabling people to make practical use of their newly acquired skills.

Q. — What you are saying really means that much depends on local conditions within a country?

A. — Yes. It was once believed that the new literates lapsed into illiteracy because of the lack of reading materials. But it's not as simple as that. We now know that local conditions are the crux of the problem . It is these conditions that must be changed so that the new literates can put their technical knowledge and skills to good use.

Q. — I suppose this means that the teaching programme of every functional literacy operation will vary to take into account these local conditions, which was not the case in the past?

A. — Yes of course. Today each project is "tailored" to fit each community both as regards scope and timing. In other words, each literacy programme varies depending on whether we are dealing with textile workers or rice farmers, fishermen or ground nut producers, young people or older persons, men or women, city workers or farmers.

Q. — Is there any relationship between national literacy programmes and the Unesco experimental projects?

A. — There are now two different views on this. There are those who feel that all the experimental projects should be closely integrated with national programmes, and those who are opposed to this and want to keep them completely separated. As a matter of fact there is really no clash or incompatability between the two approaches. It is not unlikely that the experimental projects will in due course affect national programmes even if they are not fully integrated, so that the originality and purpose of each is maintained. In any event, the final responsibility for the experimental projects always rests with the national authorities.

Q. — How are the experimental projects financed?

A. — In January 1966, the United Nations Development Programme agreed to contribute $3,600,000 for functional literacy. Algeria, Iran and Mali were the first countries selected for the operation. In June of the same year, a further $2,350,000 was set aside for projects in Ecuador and Tanzania (1). This was the first time that substantial international funds for development went to finance a literacy programme. As M. René Maheu, the Director-General of Unesco, stated at the time: "The connexion between literacy and development which Unesco has long advocated as a basic principle is now officially recognized and unequivocally confirmed."

Q. — Do governments also contribute towards the financing of these experimental projects?

A. — As a matter of fact they contribute the major share. Algeria is putting in $2,960,000; Iran, $1,700,000; Mali $3,000,000; Ecuador $1,740,000; Tanzania $5,216,000; Guinea $1,220,000; Ethiopia $2,057,000.

Here I should like to stress one point. Literacy teaching is also a social and political problem. It cannot be compared to the setting up of a research laboratory where all that is needed are the equipment and staff.

There are people who think that literacy training is an uncomplicated affair, for which only a modicum of common sense is needed. How wrong they are! Such notions have led to disaster in the past. A functional literacy programme calls for careful, complex planning and preparation which go far beyond the confines of mere reading and writing, as I have already pointed out.

Q. — Mr. Deleon, could I ask you now to describe some of the experimental projects you've mentioned?

A. — Well, let's take Algeria first. Algeria's population of persons over 15 years of age is 5,500,000. Of these, 4,400,000 are illiterate. This is a crippling handicap for a nation that is determined to industrialize itself and develop its agriculture. It urgently needs qualified manpower, and for this literacy is a vital first step. There are three functional literacy projects now in operation. The first at Staoueli, near Algiers, in one of the country's richest agricultural areas, where 5,000 persons working in autonomous agricultural estates are being trained. The second is in the industrial zone of Arzew, 40 kilometres from Oran; the third in the district of Annaba, 600 kilometres east of Algiers, where training must be provided for 70,000 workers for the petro-chemical industry and a vast metallurgical and steel-making complex.

In Iran, the project involves two operations: one in the irrigated area of the Grand Dez (not far from ancient Susa, in western Iran), where a large dam has been constructed, and modern farming methods have been introduced. The other is being carried out at of Isfahan, where 300,000 people live. In this ancient capital, famous for its rugs, 26,000 textile workers are to be trained.

In Mali, the pilot projects relate to two priority sectors, one agricultural, the other industrial. In the Ségou area and in the Baracueli and Tamani districts, the literacy campaign affects nearly 100,000 people working on the land, and is designed to raise cotton and rice production. In the Bamako area, 6,000 illiterate workers employed in a score of government enterprises are involved.

Q. — Can you tell us what a literacy project consists of?

A. — First, it is a centre where the methods and curriculum of teaching are carefully worked out; second, where the technicians needed are actually trained. But the project is not confined to the centre and does much of its work "in the field", that is, in the actual areas where groups working in agriculture or industry, are taught to read and write and receive basic professional training.

Let us take the example of Tanzania, which has 10 million inhabitants and is predominantly agricultural. The farm population represents 85 per cent of the consumer market but provides only 45 per cent of the gross national product. A pilot-project linking literacy teaching to vocational training has been started in a cotton and coffee producing area south of Lake Victoria. It covers four regions: West Lake, Mwanza, Mara and Shinganga. Cotton output, which with modern cultivation methods rose from 38,000 bales in 1955 to 161,000 in 1960, should reach over a million bales in 1980.

Ecuador, a country larger than the United Kingdom, boasts vast, though

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(1) In January 1967, $1,273,000 was approved for a project in Guinea, and in January 1968 the U.N. Development Programmed accorded $1,586,000 for aid to Ethiopia.

50 nations ask to join experimental programmes

as yet not fully exploited, natural resources. Ecuador's development plan is aimed at every sector of the economy—from agriculture to fishing and handicrafts to industry. But there is a big shortage of skilled labour. Almost 30 per cent of the workers are illiterate. Furthermore, 65 per cent of the population lives in the countryside where the illiteracy rate is as high as 43 per cent. Illiteracy among workers in the urban industrial areas varies between 15 and 17 per cent.

Three pilot zones for development have been set up in Ecuador. One at Cuenca, in the highlands, where 6,000 adults are being trained in the literacy project, and 9,000 artisans from producer co-operatives will be given vocational training. The second, in the Milagra area, where 16,000 peasants will be given literacy and vocational training. The third zone has been set up north of Quito in a 10,000 hectare tract of land, in the Pesillo district. This area feeds a population of 2,000 which will benefit from a basic literacy programme (virtually everyone is illiterate) combined with vocational education to develop local resources.

Q. — A similar project is now under way in Venezuela, but is it not quite different from those you have just described?

A. — The Venezuelan project is part of the experimental literacy programme but it is entirely financed by Venezuela itself with no contribution from the United Nations Development Programme. The literacy campaign in Venezuela is one of the most important in all Latin America. As many as 6,100 literacy centres were set up in the country in 1958 with 40,000 volunteer teachers; and special "Literacy Legions" were created for 100,000 adult students. Yet despite this, the educational level in both towns and rural areas is far from adequate for Venezuela's economic and social development plans.

Let me give you a concrete case in point. Venezuela's oil industry is in full expansion and now accounts for 20 per cent of the national product, 60 per cent of public revenue and over 90 per cent of all Venezuela's exports. Yet it employs a mere two per cent of the working population because of the grave shortage of skilled labour. The situation is little different in the iron mining and agricultural industries.

Three zones, each offering a different economic and social pattern, have been selected for the experimental project; an industrial zone, an agricultural zone, and a rural zone in the process of rapid urbanization. The industrial zone is located in the State of Bolivar, in eastern Venezuela. Here a large hydro-electric power station has been built at Macagua on the Caroni river. The Orinoco steel-works located in this region have an enormous output most of which is exported.

The second experimental zone has been set up in the State of Portuguesa where rice, sesame and cotton production have already been increased through mechanization and irrigation. The third pilot area lies at the foot of the Andes, in the State of Lara. This region has been undergoing intensive development in recent years accompanied by rapid urbanization. This has led to the large-scale migration of rural populations into towns, the mushrooming growth of "shanty towns" in the suburbs, and a sharp rise in unemployment. It is this untapped, wasted labour potential that the experimental project hopes to recuperate by offering the adults an opportunity to learn a skill or trade.

Q. — How many persons would you say are involved in these projects in Venezuela?

A. — About 300,000. Furthermore, to meet the needs of the country's industrial expansion, Venezuela's Co-operative Educational Institute and other adult education services plan to raise the number of trained personnel from 470,000 in 1962 to over 900,000 by 1970 and nearly 1,300,000 in the next seven years, that is by 1975.

Q. — Could we return just for a moment to the question of financing? Do other ways exist of helping a country to set up functional literacy projects?

A. — Well, in addition to those projects which receive multi-lateral assistance and those financed exclusively by national resources, we also see the possibility of projects receiving bilateral aid being incorporated into the experimental programme. In fact negotiations are at present under way between certain donor and recipient countries for such bilateral aid, with Unesco acting as the intermediary.

Then too, there are a number of projects where literacy is a component of agricultural or industrial development. This is true in the case of Syria where the Ghab Valley Authority project, aided by the U.N. Development Programme and carried out in co-operation with the Food and Agriculture Organization, also provides for functional literacy as an important component of the project as a whole.

Q. — Would you say that all these projects we have been discussing have some common denominator by which the results achieved could be judged?

A. — As I think I have already made clear, the basic criterion for all the projects is how well they contribute to development. But in order to gauge the effectiveness of these programmes we must carefully study their economic and social implications and compare the different methods and techniques used. This will enable us with time to piece together all the data needed to launch a much vaster and more complex operation. The pilot projects call for a lot of research and investigation, all of it extremely important, and should prove highly valuable for our future operations by helping to answer such questions as: how to go about planning out-of-school education, what the best methods are, where they can be applied with the best prospects for success, what types of programmes to organize. On the answers to these questions will depend the measure in which the struggle against illiteracy can be broadened.

Q. — What other projects are now planned?

A. — At least 50 countries have asked for Unesco aid. Until now Unesco preparatory missions have visited 31 of them. New projects are now being mapped out for Zambia, Sudan, Madagascar, Brazil, Peru and India. In India, the project is linked with the question of increased food production, where I might add in passing, extraordinary advances have been made in India in the past year. This will be a five-year project to make 750,000 adults functionally literate. But as I have said earlier, each project is distinct and geared to a specific purpose. In Nepal the programme will cover a region in the transitional stage of a subsistence and a market economy. In Algeria, we have seen that the project's aim is to promote the expansion of an ultra-modern petro-chemical complex. Between these extremes there are a host of variants.

Q. — It has been said that creating a population of new literates gives rise to many new problems, that new literates become dissatisfied with their old way of life and get ideas of grandeur. Do you think this is true?

A. — Man has always sought to better himself and rise above his station. This desire for progress deserves to be encouraged. As long as country people find opportunity for work in the cities they will continue to abandon the countryside which often lacks electricity, modern conveniences and transport facilities. But this problem cannot be solved by denying or resisting such aspirations. I think our programmes are facing the realities of the situation squarely and in a down-to-earth way, without rose-coloured glasses, without side-stepping the real issues by resorting to demagogy or being swayed by false sentiments of the exotic. But we make no bones about our wish to change things. Every one of our projects must therefore carefully take into account not only the educational patterns of each country but its entire political and economic structure. In other words, each project must reflect the political, economic and moral state of health of each country if we are to have a good chance of success.

Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris

Although the world illiteracy rate has dropped during the last 15 years, the total number of illiterates continues to rise because of the population explosion. Rural areas have by far the highest illiteracy rates. Photo shows rural living quarters of workers on a banana plantation in South America.

Literacy: the ABC of development

Unesco has carried out a major inquiry on world progress in literacy since 1965 and has published its findings in a special report, "Literacy 1965-1967." The report describes the methods used by different countries to fight illiteracy, and the new strategy that has shaped world action since 1965.

ORIGINALLY and until quite recently, action against adult illiteracy was the almost exclusive concern of non-governmental organizations, of private groups and of missions. In short, it was due to the initiative of volunteers, as though its fundamental purpose was action of a social and humanitarian character or an effort to "rehabilitate" underprivileged groups of men and women.

Today, however, most governments consider themselves directly responsible for adult literacy teaching. Simultaneously, the unconcern—in varying degrees—of businessmen, industrialists and planners for literacy work has been replaced by a growing interest on the part of those responsible for economic affairs and development plans, who have begun to endorse the major principles adopted in Teheran by the World Congress of Ministers of Education.

A new approach to literacy is thus emerging in many countries, first through the incorporation of literacy programmes in plans for educational development and more generally through their integration in plans for economic and social development.

The idea launched at Teheran of linking literacy teaching with the priorities of economic development has impelled authorities to reconsider the whole question of such priorities. It has led Ministries of Education to open discussions with planning authorities and other ministries and to envisage broad and coherent plans of action.

Striking examples of a dynamic, integrated approach to these problems are found in numerous countries. Algeria's choice of the irrigated area of Bou-Namoussa, the petro-chemical complex at Arzew and the "autonomous" estates at Staoueli as sites

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Photo Unesco - P. Bertelsen

Photo Unesco - Eric Schwab

ON THE PAINTED WALLS THE LIFE OF THE VILLAGE

ABC OF DEVELOPMENT *(Continued)*

for a pilot project in functional literacy can be considered as a model application of the selective strategy adopted in Teheran.

Similar functional literacy projects are linked with textile factories at Chbin-el-Kom (United Arab Republic) and in the Ghab Valley (Syria), with oil installations in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, with fisheries in Qatar, and with the semi-rural district of Tazerka in Tunisia.

Others have been launched in industrial plants at Cap Vert (Senegal), for harbour works and a rubber factory at Monrovia (Liberia), in the "co-operative villages" of the Republic of the Congo, the Tuncbilek mines (Turkey), the Youth Settlement Schemes in Ceylon, the Nam-Ngum barrage in Laos, the Rodovia project in Brazil and agrarian reform areas in Chile and Guatemala.

Many countries have taken far-reaching steps in planning for literacy. Due to profound differences in national structures, these measures vary widely; but the aim of many is to introduce more rigorous programming and to fix medium term objectives.

Some Arab countries, for example, aim to make certain age groups of the population literate within ten years; others have set a target date of 15 years. A Philippines government decree and laws provide for a 6-year systematic literacy campaign (1966-1972). Burma hopes to attain its literacy goals even more rapidly. Iran's fourth five-year development plan (1967-1972) envisages a 30 per cent reduction in the illiteracy rate. Italy, Mexico, Turkey and other countries have adapted literacy programmes to conditions in various regions and to the population groups concerned.

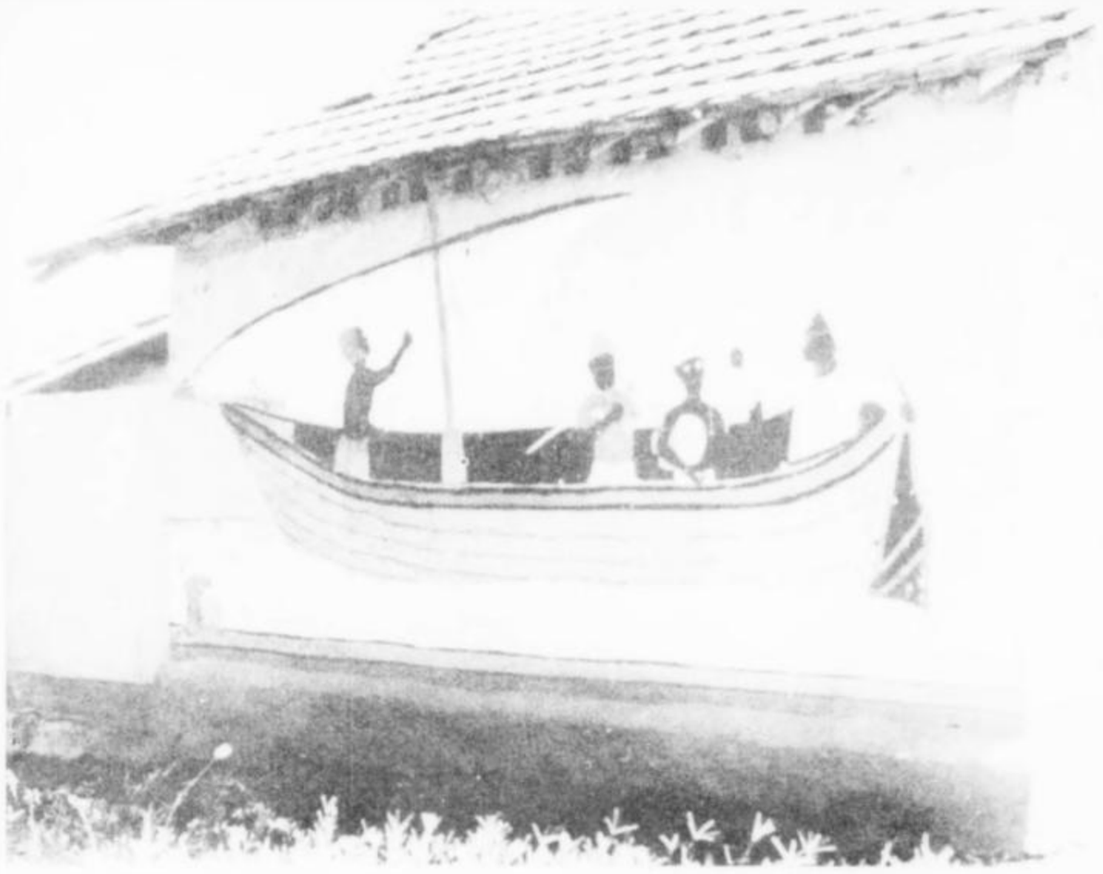
A NUMBER of countries have passed laws making it compulsory for certain sections of the population to participate in literacy programmes. In Libya and Iraq laws are being drawn up to compel illiterate adults to attend classes. Elsewhere (as in Guatemala and Venezuela) new legislation aims to extend a system under which firms invest a part of their profits in literacy programmes for their employees. In Cambodia and Ecuador recent laws require literate adults to help teach illiterate fellow citizens.

To meet the demands of literacy development, other laws covering administrative reorganizations have been promulgated or are being adopted. New national literacy services have thus been set up in Argentina, the Republic of the Congo, Dahomey, Ethiopia, Korea, Mauritania and the Republic of Viet-Nam.

In Indonesia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Paraguay and the United Arab Republic, existing services have been reorganized, and many countries have created new regional, provincial or municipal administrations to deal with literacy.

An important recommendation by the Teheran Congress calls for the adoption in literacy projects of the multiple approach used in programmes of economic and social development. The idea has had major repercussions in a number of countries which have given an interministerial structure to the body responsible for drafting and directing the national literacy policy.

In some (Burma, Chile, Colombia, Greece, Nepal and Senegal), these bodies and consultative committees are primarily concerned with interministerial co-ordination; in others (Ivory



Photos Unesco - P. Bertelsen

A colourful panorama of scenes from village life unfolds on the painted walls of most of the houses in this Tanzanian hamlet near Dar-es-Salaam. The Tanzanian artist, Ali Panga, a sisal plantation worker, has portrayed various community activities: fishermen in their boat and workers in the fields (above) and a village meeting (opposite far left). Left, a village literacy class. Tanzania is one of the countries where literacy campaigns have made most progress in recent years. Mobile libraries, a gift of the Scandinavian countries, now bring books to newly-literate villagers, and adult education and literacy programmes have been aided by Unesco's Gift Coupon Programme. A major experimental literacy project launched near Lake Victoria with Unesco help has been geared to the development of local irrigation works and the modernization of cotton and coffee production.

Coast, India, Mali, Thailand), national committees, whose members represent a broad range of activities, draw up the overall national literacy policy.

The composition of these committees which, in Algeria, Iraq, the U.A.R. and Tunisia, for example, include not only representatives of the usual administrations, but also spokesmen for political parties and associations with mass memberships, shows that the role of literacy in development is now fully understood.

In some countries literacy campaigns are controlled by several authorities. In Afghanistan programmes are being run simultaneously by the Ministry of Education, the Rural Education Department of the Ministry of the Interior, the Welfare Society (which organizes courses for women) and the Army.

In Latin America, where many literacy programmes are operated jointly by private organizations and independently-run vocational training centres, Ministries of Education usually insist on assuming the general direction or at least the co-ordination of these programmes.

In some African countries literacy services come under the authority of other ministers than the Minister of Education: in Zambia, the Ministry of Community Development and in Kenya the Ministry of Co-operatives and Social Services, for example.

THE impulse given by the Teheran Congress to literacy campaigns in general is shown by an encouraging increase in the literacy budgets of many countries.

The cost of literacy programmes represents only a small fraction of the total resources assigned to education and is thus only a relatively light burden. Even so, the budgetary increases are seen as a significant development in the struggle against illiteracy.

And as literacy teaching is given a more functional emphasis, private enterprises, particularly those in the production sector, are bound to become more closely involved with such campaigns and therefore the cost of literacy projects should no longer fall on public budgets alone.

A look at recent statistics on the number of people made literate in certain countries reveals first, a sharp increase in new literates during 1965-1967, but secondly, a persistently low ratio of these new literates as a percentage of the total illiterate population. In other words, the results are appreciable but still far from adequate.

The modern approach to literacy teaching is based on a better understanding of the direct connexion between illiteracy and underdevelopment. This has brought a clearer view of ways in which literacy programmes can be integrated with national plans for economic expansion.

Literacy programmes of this new type, launched in many parts of the world, fit into a coherent pattern of economic and social objectives in each country.

In Gabon, a national committee plans literacy activities to meet priority needs in specific sectors of the economy; in Nigeria a literacy campaign is being run for tobacco workers; in Brazil projects have been launched for illiterate workers engaged on the Urubupunga Dam and a number of electrification schemes; India has its Hyderabad literacy programme for agricultural workers in the High Yield

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Literacy on the beam (via radio and TV)

Crop Varieties Programme; and in Yugoslavia factory workers' councils organize education and literacy programmes in conjunction with vocational training.

Increasing attempts are being made to combine literacy teaching, even where it retains a classroom flavour in its teaching methods, with vocational, civil or political education.

In Madagascar, Niger and Senegal, literacy work is combined with campaigns for rural development. Elsewhere in Africa (Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria), in Asia (India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Republic of Viet-Nam), and in Latin America (Haiti, Dominican Republic) it is becoming more closely integrated with community development projects.

In Tunisia literacy teaching has become an integral feature of agricultural and industrial enterprises, providing a general education in economic and social questions, which aims above all to stimulate an awareness of development problems.

In Indonesia, the "Pancha Marga" programme merges literacy and adult education with a long-term development project.

CUBA'S literacy campaign, as a follow up to the efforts made in 1961, aims to bring adults up to the sixth year of schooling so that they may share fully in the nation's social and economic development. Priority is given to the functional aspect of literacy and adult education programmes by linking them closely with the work of the Institute of Agrarian Reform, and the Ministry of Industry and Training of Intermediate Technicians.

The "psycho-social" literacy method introduced in Chile seeks to make a functional contribution to social education; it brings group-dynamics into play and uses dialogue as a method of stimulating the critical faculties and an awareness of community and national problems.

Much has been done since 1965 to provide reading material for illiterate adults and handbooks for their teachers. Teaching manuals and readers for new literates have been prepared and printed in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Arab countries.

Significant experiments have been made by publishing special newspapers or inserting pages in existing newspapers for the benefit of newly-literate adults so as to maintain their interest in reading and offer them articles on suitable subjects written at the appropriate level.

Newspapers of this type are published in Cameroon, Guatemala, Haiti, Kenya, Madagascar, Nepal, Spain and elsewhere. In addition, literacy activities have been publicized in articles and special features in the popular press of many countries, including Ceylon, Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Mali, Paraguay and Syria.

NUMEROUS countries are using the audio-visual media in their literacy programmes to supplement and sometimes to replace traditional teaching media and materials. Media thus employed range from the simple poster to television programmes.

Radio has been widely used in literacy programmes after first serving to stimulate interest and mobilize public opinion in support of literacy campaigns.

Ethiopia launched an experimental literacy programme by radio in 1965; in Madagascar hundreds of radio receivers have been supplied to literacy centres; in Mali a "radio school" programme is broadcast every evening for those who speak Bambara; much radio time in Niger is devoted to educational broadcasts, including the teaching of spoken French.

Iran uses a special transmitter for literacy teaching in the Ghazwin district; every literacy centre in Ceylon is equipped with a radio receiver; in Nepal an adult education programme is broadcast weekly and in Malaysia, over 1,500 receivers have been supplied to literacy centres.

In Latin America, Argentina uses the radio to bring literacy to the country's most isolated communities; Guatemala has radio schools; Mexico started literacy courses by radio in 1966 and Peru has distributed 1,300 receivers to schools running literacy classes.

Jamaica, Spain and the U.S.A. also use radio for literacy teaching.

An active ally of literacy, the cinema has proved particularly effective in campaigns to stimulate the incentive for literacy and for popularizing educational themes. El Salvador and Tunisia in particular have employed it with outstanding success.

Television is used to teach reading, writing and arithmetic in only a small number of countries as yet and mostly on an experimental basis. But its potentialities in education are far-reaching.

Brazil, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Ghana, Italy, Iran, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, the United Arab Republic and the U.S.A. have all used television for literacy and adult education, and Chile, Ethiopia, India and Uganda plan to do so.

The transition from traditional literacy teaching—simple schooling in reading and writing—to functional literacy forming an integral part of a programme of vocational guidance or training necessarily involves changes in the recruitment and training of teachers.

In most countries adult literacy courses are chiefly run by schoolteachers in addition to their normal work.

It has been noted, however, that fully trained schoolteachers tend to follow the conventional approach to education and traditional teaching methods. So an effort is being made to recruit volunteer teachers from other callings: agricultural instructors and nursing personnel in Niger, rural development leaders in Laos, instructors on loan from apprentice training schools in Senegal and factory foremen in Tunisia.

In other countries such as Algeria, Mauritania and Morocco, the urgent need for trained workers in the new industrial plants has led authorities to recruit literacy workers from among factory overseers, who are given short training courses.

THIS new trend is even more marked in countries where the majority of literacy workers are recruited not from the teaching profession, but from among part-time volunteers belonging to the better-educated sections of the community.

This survey of national efforts affirms the reality of international co-operation in efforts for literacy, because the progress so far made has often only been possible thanks to an appreciable contribution in the form of international assistance.

The concept of international assistance has developed considerably in the past two years and must continue to do so, since it has now become obvious that the eradication of illiteracy as an obstacle to development is in the interests not only of the countries where the evil exists, but of those which have freed themselves from it.

Photo © Pablo Volta

Costumes with distinct local styles are still worn in the villages of Sardinia (Italy). The womenfolk, who excel at craftwork of all kinds, make their own dresses (as these young women from Orgosolo have done). In the past 20 years Sardinia has taken a big step toward modernization, but many villages preciously maintain their ancient customs.

THE SHORTHAND CLASS THAT STARTED AN AVALANCHE

by Francesco Salis

We present here the remarkable story of Francesco Salis and the work he has accomplished in transforming a small town in Sardinia. Italy is today one of the most advanced countries of Europe both economically and culturally, but certain of its southern regions and islands such as Sardinia have not kept pace with this remarkable growth. In recent years these poorer regions have been making a determined effort to modernize and develop. In September 1967, Francesco Salis was awarded the Mohammed Reza Pahlavi Prize (honourable mention) for the many years of service he has given to the town of Santulussurgiu (Sardinia) as a result of which illiteracy was reduced from 37 per cent to 4.5 per cent. The story was written in co-operation with "Unesco Courier" staff editor, Lucio Attinelli.

SANTULUSSURGIU is a tiny town of four thousand inhabitants in the province of Cagliari on the island of Sardinia, perched on the eastern slopes of Mount Ferro about 600 metres above sea-level. Over the past ten years more than a thousand persons have left the town to emigrate to Argentina, Australia, France or Switzerland. Every year a few come back to spend their holidays on the island, choose a bride and then return to their adopted countries.

Most of the inhabitants of Santu-

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ISLAND OF POETRY TOURNAMENTS

Island birthplace of one of the most ancient Mediterranean cultures, the changing Sardinia of today frequently reveals many unexpected facets of its antique past. This is particularly true of the mountainous areas where life for the pastoral inhabitants remains austere. (Below, an elderly shepherd wearing a mastruca, or sheep-skin coat.)

Sardinia's great tradition is the Sagra, a popular festival during which minstrel-poets travel from village to village improvising and reciting their verses at poetry tournaments. These contests often take place after such popular events as the ballutundu, a dance performed to the music of the launedda (photos above), or the carnival-like procession of masked shepherds at Mamoïda each of whom carries some 50 small bells (left). Competitors in these tourneys may be young or old, labourers or shepherds, and many have an extraordinary gift for improvised versifying. In village squares, venders offer the texts of poems or narrative compositions that have won particular acclaim. Not surprisingly, one of the names held most dear by the people of Sardinia is that of Grazia Deledda, the Sardinian novelist and 1926 Nobel Prizewinner for Literature who drew inspiration from the island's customs and traditions.

Photos © Pablo Volta

THE SHORTHAND CLASS *(Continued from page 17)*

The magic of capturing the poet's words

The men in many Sardinian villages still wear traditional costumes such as those shown here, consisting of a black coat with open sleeves, a kind of short kilt of black wool and short linen trousers coming a little below the knee. Perhaps by the time the little girl in the background has grown up, they will have abandoned them for modern dress.

Photo © Pablo Volta

lussurgiu live by sheep-farming or stock-breeding, which until a few years ago formed the basic pattern of Sardinia's economy. Since 1840 the town has been proud of its secondary school which gave it a certain cultural prestige over other towns in Sardinia. Even so, widespread illiteracy, and more important, relapse into illiteracy were a marked feature of Santulussurgiu when in 1951 a Centre for Popular Culture was first opened in the town.

The Centre for Popular Culture is a unit of Italy's National Union for the Fight Against Illiteracy founded in 1947 to promote literacy and community development in certain areas of southern Italy as a means of improving the cultural, social and economic situation of the people.

Today there are ninety such centres in southern Italy, with 800 volunteer helpers and over 30,000 pupils. Each centre has its own story to tell. This is the story of the Santulussurgiu centre I have been in charge of for the past seventeen years.

Early in 1951 a small group of elementary school teachers, university students and members of the liberal professions got together to discuss a problem which had been on all our minds for some time, namely, our duty and responsibility towards the shepherds, stock-breeders, farmers and craftsmen of our poverty-stricken community.

All of us agreed that we could no longer stand by doing nothing except idle away our free time playing cards, gathering for drinks in the cafes, or discussing the latest fashionable novel, which gave us the illusion of being "active intellectuals". At the time there were twenty of us who felt that something could be done about our town.

A PRELIMINARY survey had revealed that at least 1,100 persons out of our population of 4,000 (37 per cent) were either completely illiterate (that is, had never learned to read of write) or had reverted to illiteracy because our town made no provisions for cultural or educational activities.

Once we had brought the problem out into the open we decided to act. Our first step was to organize such activities that would enable us to make direct contact with the villagers and then gain their friendship and confidence. This led to the creation of the Centre of Popular Culture of Santulussurgiu which ultimately grew to be one of the most important in Italy.

We started out in a flush of enthusiasm, little aware of the many complex problems we would be up against. We had naively believed that Adult Education meant nothing more

than applying to adults the experience we had acquired in traditional elementary school teaching.

We were in for a rude awakening. We soon realized that adults could not be treated like children or made to submit to teaching designed for children. The adults balked at such treatment first as a matter of pride and then because of the obvious fact that they brought with them into the class long years of knowledge and experience.

Thus it was that we had not only to revise our teaching methods but to make radical changes in the traditional classroom pattern. There were to be no "benches", no "masters-and-pupils" approach, but instead work-tables and a mature, friendly relationship between teacher and "centristi" (as the students came to be called).

SO began our work for literacy and for the renaissance of culture and education in our community.

But if we ourselves clearly saw the advantages of such a cultural programme, limited though it was at first, the adults we were trying to reach did not share our enthusiasm, often greeting our efforts lackadaisically or with a shrug. In a sense, this is not surprising. Grown-ups often react this way to a new idea, and to lure them to us we had to try to think up off-beat approaches, some of which I must say worked out surprisingly well.

One of the ideas we hit on which met with striking success was a course in shorthand! At first sight this may seem an odd way to promote "culture", but it worked like a charm in our town.

To most of the people of Santulussurgiu, the ability to write down a person's words at top speed, as fast as they are spoken, was looked upon as a feat of magic, or just about. When the stenography course was announced there was a rush of applicants. All of them wanted to register in order to be able to transcribe the "poetry tournaments" that take place at *Sagra* time, the popular festival still very much in vogue in Sardinia during which the minstrel-poets travel from village to village improvising and reciting their verses in big contests.

Where I come from, there is never a *Sagra* festival that does not feature, besides modern forms of entertainment such as village dancing and a football match, a poetry tournament.

These tournaments are quite unusual. On a stage set up with laurel leaf decorations, recalling those of ancient Rome on the Capitoline hill, the wandering poet recites his improvised verses, usually in octameter, and to the accompaniment of a chorus of four voices, on a host of themes ranging from the religious to the historical, the biblical to contemporary social. The themes are chosen by a jury appointed for the occasion.

These performances are highly popular with both young people and the older folk. The poets themselves are usually labourers, cattle-farmers and peasants with an extraordinary gift for extemporaneous versifying and narrative composition. Not infrequently they are persons with practically no education, but if the audience likes the rhyme pattern of the poetry it makes allowances if the subject matter is not as good. However, when a poet manages to combine lovely words and ideas with exquisite rhythm, rhyme and metre then the audience goes wild.

In those days, tape-recorders were unknown in Sardinia, and the shorthand idea was an immediate hit. I remember the day the course started... people began to arrive in droves, a number actually clambering in through the window!

Of course the classes were free.

That is how, way back in 1951, we first began to reach the common people and were able to convince them that we had no religious or political axe to grind. This non-partisan approach soon won us the trust and respect of the whole town, and increasing numbers of people crowded into our classes at the Centre for Popular Culture.

We, of course, were perfectly aware that the stenography courses were only the first phase in our education strategy. And so indeed it turned out to be. After a while we were able to reduce the number of shorthand classes and introduce other subjects like history, geography and mathematics into our weekly teaching schedule.

All our work was geared to the problems of our town and the different ways of meeting them. Everything we did was directly linked to life in the community; we never dealt with abstract problems. Little by little our centre assumed a shape which differed sharply from the traditional school approach in Sardinia... there were no fixed hours, no fixed term, students could arrive or leave when they pleased with no questions asked, no justification needed or permission required.

At first our quarters were located in the basement of the elementary school, previously used as storage space, and which we converted to our purposes. Later we moved to a ramshackle gymnasium which we rebuilt with volunteer help from the "centristi", the teachers and our other colleagues.

In 1959, at the end of eight years, four spent in the elementary school basement and four in the gymnasium, we acquired a magnificent 18th Century house. We were able to buy it partly with funds made available by the National Union for the Fight Against Illiteracy, partly through the generosity of the former owners who let us have it virtually as a gift for a ridiculously low price.

The adults drawn to the Centre by the shorthand courses were not illiterates but persons who believed they were fairly well educated. I say "believed" because little by little these persons came to realize that their many years away from school as well as the environment they lived in had left many gaps in their knowledge.

The true illiterates came only later, after a survey enabled us first to identify and get to know them and then to persuade them to attend our classes. The first to be won over were the women, the primary inducement being their keen desire to be able to write to their children living abroad.

Here is a typical conversation between the instructor and the women:

Instructor. — Why should you who have several sons abroad, have to share your family secrets with a stranger just because he can write your letters for you? And what if that person shoots his mouth off and lets the whole town in on your private affairs? Is that what you want?

Mother. — What can I do about it? I'm too old now to learn to write at my age any more.

Instructor. — What's age got to do with it? Being old doesn't mean you're dead. So don't act as though you're dead and give up living and all the joys of life. And besides, you're not old anyway. Do you think being forty or fifty or even sixty is old any more? Come on now, you know very well how it hurts you not to be able to write your letters yourself. Isn't it time you stopped belittling yourself and being the slave of others. Just think how happy your sons in Australia, Argentina or Switzerland will be the day they get a letter from you in your own handwriting.

FOR the women this kind of discussion usually did the trick. It also worked with the men, but in their case we had another convincing argument: a farmer who knew to read—no matter how small his plot of land—had a much better chance of learning how to run his farm better, improving his yield and making more money.

In our teaching, we paid special attention to the various interests and attitudes of our grown-up pupils, and we found that our results were strikingly improved because of the community spirit which we encouraged at the Centre. Once an illiterate adult joined our group, he knew he was no longer alone, no longer an outcast of society, that by attending a literacy class he also took part in the planning and running of the Centre.

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The success that spelled disaster

He became a member of our community, took part in our cultural visits and outings, mingled with those who had learned to read, with the instructors and their assistants who had become his friends. More than that, he participated in the democratic life of the Centre, and as one the members of the "Centristi" Assembly, he had a voice in the adoption of specific projects for the future. With time, "Training in Democracy" thus became the main feature of the Centre's activities.

The pride taken in the Centre by the participants was really quite extraordinary. Every day letters sent to us by our former students arrived by the bag-load from every continent. By 1956-1957, as a result of our methods, illiteracy as such had virtually vanished from Santulussurgiu.

But then we saw that something had gone awry. It awoke us to the fact that we could not sit back on our laurels and be content merely with our literacy and cultural programme. We found that despite the devotion of our voluntary teams (working hours were from 2 p.m. to 2 or 3 a.m.) the results were often disappointing.

As our students learned to read their judgement and critical faculties developed and they became painfully aware of the backwardness of their environment. Instinctively they felt an urge to emigrate, to get away from such surroundings.

Thus, by sparking this feeling of discontent and anguish we were actually encouraging emigration, which is after all a logical reaction of people who aspire after something and find it denied to them by conditions in their own region. Our Centre, in a sense, was like a railway station waiting room where everyone is on the point of departure.

Faced with this situation, we promptly undertook a careful re-appraisal of the aims of our institution to see how our work could be remoulded to meet this broader social and economic dilemma. We wanted our work to bring prosperity to our own land and not of course to encourage the migration of the population to more favoured regions elsewhere in the world.

But what could our Centre possibly do about it? As teachers and members of the liberal professions we were in no position to transform our educational institution into an employment bureau to provide work for our students. For that, a miracle would have been needed. But just becoming aware of the problem was in itself a miracle.

Intellectuals are often so wrapped up in their own professions and interests that nothing else counts. Here, on the contrary, something else *did* count. And so, despite ourselves and our rather abstract interests, we found ourselves forced to descend to more practical levels, into the slippery arena of production, trade and other business questions we had never envisaged.

AROUND the years 1957-1958 the unemployment of women had become one of the big social problems of Santulussurgiu. In our town women at home are usually divided into one of two categories: married women dependent on their husbands who support the family; unmarried women (many of whom never marry) dependent on their parents or brothers.

We decided to try a new experiment the development of our local crafts by transforming one of the oldest traditions of Sardinia, the hand weaving craft (carpets and textiles) into a full fledged market industry. In other words, to change a subsistence economy into a developed production economy.

The problem was how to go about it. Our traditional looms were so rudimentary in construction that output could never match the speed required to ensure low, competitive prices. The only answer was to get rid of the old looms and bring in modern ones like the Jacquard loom. The opposition from the womenfolk, accustomed to the traditional ways for generations, can well be imagined. In the end, however, we won out. The changes were made, but not without much psychological and physical hand-wringing.

How well I recall the apprehensions of the young women we brought together to form our first weavers' co-operative. After working for a whole year without knowing what the outcome would be, they awaited, trembling with emotion, the news that their efforts had really shown a profit. Swatches and samples had to be made and distributed, market research had to be carried out, and preparations made to fill the first orders.

But the women had faith in us and in the Centre that had helped and guided them over the years. At last success did come. And when it did, the attitude of the adult population to education changed overnight.

To be an ordinary labourer working only for the money it brings is one thing; to be a member of a co-operative sharing responsibility or its management is another. It demanded much more from each individual: proficiency in public relations, market research, costing procedures, as well as a constant effort to improve the final product. All these new ideas required a new spirit and a new approach along with new knowledge and know-how.

The demands on the Centre grew steadily as the number of students rose. There were requests for courses in economics, accounting, the history of art and many other subjects. It was no longer illiteracy that was now our big problem but how to fill the gap of ignorance that prevented the citizens of our town from carrying out their new activities.

The swift pace of modern life demands of all of us, wherever we live, that we keep abreast of the latest developments in our changing world. It is this, more than anything else, that has made the modern concept of life-long education so vital today.

There are now five flourishing co-operatives in Santulussurgiu, one for weaving, another for knitwear production, a third for the manufacture of gloves (mass-produced and exported abroad), the fourth for cabinet making and wood-carving, and the fifth and most recent one, a cattle-breeding co-operative with 127 members. These are not simply commercial firms but true co-operatives born out of our cultural activities and sustaining these cultural activities.

After sixteen years of effort, I think I can say that the evolution and re-thinking that has marked our institution has permitted us to set up methods and instruments of production that are also methods and instruments of education.

In other words, by attacking illiteracy within our local framework we have managed to attain a standard of adult training to organize a number of truly modern commercial enterprises that are contributing to the social and economic development of our region, and thereby extracating us from the poverty and ignorance that have plagued us for generations.

A talk with Princess Ashraf of Iran

Her Highness Princess Ashraf, sister of His Imperial Majesty the Shahinshah of Iran, recently accorded an exclusive interview to the "Unesco Courier" on the problems of illiteracy. Chairman of Unesco's International Consultative Liaison Committee for Literacy, Princess Ashraf has for many years played a leading role in the struggle against illiteracy both in her country and in other parts of the world.

Photo Unesco - Dominique Roger

Princess Ashraf Pahlavi (on left) sister of His Imperial Majesty the Shahinshah of Iran, presents the 1967 Mohamed Reza Pahlavi Prize for outstanding work in literacy to Rose Omari, a Tanzanian schoolgirl, representing the Tabora Girls Secondary School (Tanzania). Girls at the school were awarded the prize at Unesco's H.Q. in Paris, on International Literacy Day, September 8, 1967, as volunteers who taught 400 adults to read and write.

Photo Unesco - Dominique Roger

Iran's Army of Knowledge—an education corps of young soldiers who spend their entire military service as teachers in villages and country hamlets—is now world famous. Recruits are used to teach parents and children to read and write Persian and improve their living conditions. Here as an adult class in a school courtyard near Kazvin (north-west Iran) is about to end, a little boy crosses the threshold for the next class.

QUESTION. — For years you have played a leading role in the world struggle to wipe out literacy. Can you tell us Your Highness, what led you to take an active part in meeting this problem?

ANSWER. — For that we have to go back 25 years to the early 1940s. At that time I became interested in the social and health problems of my country and this opened my eyes to the magnitude of illiteracy in Iran. One step soon led to another, and then about nine or ten years ago our big literacy programme began to take shape. It was launched a good four years before the Teheran Conference of 1965 on Illiteracy.

After the conference, the campaign became one of our primary objectives. A National Literacy Committee was set up with the Empress as President and myself as Vice-President and many prominent Iranians as members. It is difficult to say at this stage how successful we have been thus far, for up to now our work has been more or less exploratory. Iran is a big country with many traditions and customs and these do not always allow for quick change. We have found that the poorest, most backward parts of our country are the hardest to make literate. Many adults, especially women, are not interested in going to school, and we have a big job in trying to persuade them to do so. Nevertheless, I am convinced that within the next 20

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The dam alongside the blackboard

Photo: KWPA, Iran

The ruins of Susa, a city which flourished 7,000 years ago, stand near the Dez River in Western Iran, its palaces and monuments recalling the splendours of the ancient kingdom of Elam. One of the world's oldest cities, Susa was destroyed on several occasions. Darius I and Artaxerxes built magnificent palaces there, and adorned it with innumerable art treasures including ceramics and bronze and stone sculptures. The royal audience hall of King Darius covered no less than two and a half acres. Down the centuries the broad, fertile lands surrounding the city became parched and arid. Today, fed by waters from a vast irrigation network supplied from a 650 ft. high dam across the Dez River, they are producing up to seven crops of alfalfa a year. Built with aid from the World Bank, the dam (shown here under construction) is part of a major economic development project, incorporating literacy programmes for the local people.

or 30 years illiteracy will no longer be a problem in Iran. But as long as illiterate persons exist anywhere in the world the struggle must go on for everyone.

Q. — Is it not true that the Army of Knowledge has achieved some rather remarkable results which are now world famous?

A. — Yes it has. The Army of Knowledge has done and is doing an extraordinary job. But this does not mean we have solved our problems. As long as Iran's 6 to 12 year old children do not attend school, illiteracy will remain a problem. If we really wish to eradicate illiteracy we must strike at the root of the problem, the education of our children.

Iran is now spending as much as 30 to 35 per cent of its national budget on education. In about five years, 99 per cent of the children in our towns will be going to school, but in the villages only one child in two will be attending classes. This means that many of our children who are now seven or eight will add to the number of illiterates tomorrow. We are planning a complete overhaul of our educational system to try to meet this situation, but at the same time our Committee is tackling the problem of our 14 and 15 year old teenagers who have never been to school.

Q. — I believe that Iran has had an important role to play in the new idea of functional literacy linked to development, has it not?

A. — Like many countries we in Iran first thought that literacy by itself was the answer to progress. But it doesn't always work that way. And we found ourselves asking the question: "Literacy for what?" Let me give you an example. Our Literacy Committee appointed a team of educators and asked me to participate, to outline a programme for one of the poorest regions of our country where 97 per cent of the women are illiterate.

Well, after investigating conditions there we decided to use most of our budget to build a dam and a road! Only then would the blackboards and chalk be useful. You see, we had long talks with the inhabitants in their tents. When we told them they had to learn to read and write they thought we were mad! They told us they had barely enough food and water or medicine for their children. We understood that if we wanted to make any real progress we had to view the whole problem of illiteracy in terms of development.

Q. — As President of the Union of Iranian Women, would you say that the women of your country present a special problem? Are they interested in learning modern ways and in education generally?

A. — I do not think it difficult to convince women to adopt modern ways. In our country, as elsewhere, women have not been emancipated for very long. Schools and universities have been opened to them only in the past 40 years. But even today women find themselves at a distinct disadvantage from every point of view when compared to men. This is especially true in the rural areas. In our villages a girl still has difficulty attending the same class as the boys when the teacher is a man.

Despite this, I place my greatest hopes in the women of my country. Their influence in the home is enormous. They can persuade their husbands or their fathers that it is no sin for a girl to get an education. The Koran, you know, makes no distinction between men and women. In fact it says that every man and every woman must read, that it is their duty to learn to read. But over the centuries the words of the Prophet have been distorted by prejudice. No one can deny, however, that the Prophet's mission started with the one word READ. And our people are fully aware of this.

Yes, women are perhaps our most valuable asset: they are eager to learn, they want their children to be educated, they understand the great changes the literacy campaign hopes to bring about. I need hardly add that those women who have had an education are among our strongest and most vocal supporters. In Iran, as in most countries, 75 per cent of the educated women choose teaching as a profession.

Q. — How would you describe the present role of literacy within the framework of a nation's economic development?

A. — Literacy is the ladder or springboard. The goal is the development of the country, the development of every man and woman. It is not literacy for literacy's sake. The ultimate aim is to equip people to work better and live a better life. Once men and women have had even a little education their life changes. A literacy campaign acts like a catalytic agent; it encourages a person and the community he lives in to want to improve standards of living which are no longer compatible with the modern world.

RUGGED PEDESTRIANS

Say the word Persian and you immediately think of rugs. Masterpieces of colour and design, they reflect the pride of designers and artisans who cherish their centuries-old craft. A good rug improves in quality when the wool is compact and well flattened. So it is often a surprise to visitors to find newly-made rugs spread across the pavement where the feet of passers by help achieve the desired result (photo below). Right, a woman textile worker from Isfahan. A Unesco experimental literacy programme has been started for the benefit of the 26,000 persons employed in Isfahan's textile industries.

Photos © Atlas Photo - C. Lénars

'Our only realistic hope of achieving the total eradication of illiteracy is by a complete reversal of traditional attitudes and by regarding eradication not only as an end in itself, but as one which must be attained at once and at all costs'

by Sir Charles Jeffries

We publish below the final chapter from a recent book, "Illiteracy: A World Problem" by Sir Charles Jeffries (Pall Mall Press, London, Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1967). Sir Charles advocates a much broader frontal assault on the world problems of illiteracy than Unesco does at the present stage. Nevertheless the "Unesco Courier" feels that the reflections of this important world personality will help to bring into sharper focus for world opinion the dramatic situation created by the growing number of illiterates in the world today.

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AS one turns the pages of the official reports and the newsletters of the organizations dedicated to the war against illiteracy, it is impossible not to be inspired by the many efforts in so many parts of the world pressing towards the same end. To make a complete catalogue would fill many volumes. I can only here pick out a few illustrations at random.

For instance, in north-east Brazil, where the illiteracy rate is about 75 per cent, there is the *Cruzada ABC* which aims, with the support of the Presbyterian churches in America, to produce one million adult literates by 1970. There is, in Zambia, a similar target set by the Ministry for Community Development and Social Welfare. In Bolivia, there are "nuclear schools", which have nothing to do with atomic physics but are rural schools used as the "nuclei" of intensive drives against illiteracy.

In Delhi, capital of India, with a quarter of a million illiterates, thousands are being taught to read in hundreds of classes organized by the city's Adult Education Board; and the same kind of thing is happening in other cities of India. In Iran, the army is on the march in this peaceful war. In Kenya and the Ivory Coast, television has been brought into the battle. In Cameroon, thousands of school teachers keep their schools open after hours, teaching the mothers the same lessons that their children have learned during the day.

SIR CHARLES JEFFRIES *has had a distinguished career in British Government service. He is now Secretary of the Ranfurly Library Service, London, a non-profit organization helping in the struggle against illiteracy by sending books as free gifts to developing countries where educational, social and economic progress is hampered by a shortage of suitable reading material. In addition to his latest book on Illiteracy, Sir Charles is the author of many books, including "Transfer to Power: Problems of the Passage to Self-Government" (1960) and "Ceylon: The Path to Independence" (1962).*

Photo Unesco - J.-C. Bois

Perched atop an electric pylon, a Mali technician explains to a member of an experimental literacy campaign the Bambara and French vocabulary used by working electricians in this West African country. The terms are being used, along with other technical vocabulary gathered from other sources, in practical literacy courses now under way in Mali, aimed at about 6,000 adults working in government services and 100,000 persons employed in rice and cotton production.

Everywhere governments and municipal authorities, churches and voluntary bodies, professionals and amateurs are engaged in the great work. Everywhere people are learning to read by the thousands a year. Again, to take some instances at random from the official statistics, the number of adults taught to read and write in 1962 was 191,273 in Ethiopia, 4,000 in Malawi, 18,783 in Rhodesia. In 1963 nearly 400,000 learned in Iran, 116,000 in Mexico.

Reading the many reports, with their genuine record of success and their heartening evidence of so much good done to so many people, one is tempted, despite the immensity of the task, to take comfort from Clough's well-known lines:

For while the tired waves, vainly
[breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets
[making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the
[main.

One is tempted: but it will not do. While I have been writing this book, the number of people alive in the world has increased by something like the whole current population of the British Isles. In the six years 1961-66, the number of illiterates in the world has increased by something like 200 million. By how much (if at all) has the capacity of the world to feed its people increased in this period? The inability of 1,000 million people to read and write remains a millstone round the neck of progress . . .

Up to now, men have been comforted by the notion that, with the development of universal primary education, the problem will solve itself, not as quickly as the idealist might have hoped, but still within a generation or two. This, after all, is what has happened in the developed countries.

"Among the various cultural, social and economic factors related to illiteracy, obviously the most important is

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'Like learning to walk, to talk, to plough, to ride a bicycle or swim'

the education of children in primary schools. If all children of school age in any country attended school for a sufficient length of time, there would eventually be no adult illiterates in the population, except those mentally deficient and incapable of learning to read and write. It follows, therefore, that the best means of preventing illiteracy is to provide adequate education for all children."

So stated an official Unesco publication in 1957 (1). And a Committee of the Commonwealth Education Conference of 1964 declared: "The target for the main long-term effort to eradicate illiteracy is obviously in the schools."

THE word "obviously" is recurrent and significant. *Punch* used to have a feature called "Glimpses of the Obvious", in which it ridiculed portentous platitudes in public pronouncements. I have no wish to ridicule these statements, which are "obviously" true, but the attitude they express is based on an illusion which has now been shattered.

Quoting United Nations statistics, the *Population Profile* issued by the Population Reference Bureau Inc. of Washington, DC., on September 26, 1966, revealed that, of the 373 million school-age children in the world, only about 115 million—or 30 per cent—are in school; and of those who are, the majority will not even complete the primary course and will very likely relapse into illiteracy.

Even in a relatively advanced country such as Brazil, the average number of years of education completed is little over two and a half. In India (to quote the same authoritative source), there are 55 million children in school, of whom 40 million are in the elementary grades, and 132.5 million not receiving any formal education. The population of India is growing by at least 12 million a year.

A parallel situation exists over vast areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Nearly 85 per cent of the births occurring in the world today take place in the "developing" areas, and in many of these countries something like half the total population is under the age of twenty-one.

In the teeth of these stark and inescapable facts, only the most ostrich-like complacency could pretend that any substance remains in the conventional assumption that the problem of illiteracy will be solved in any foreseeable time by the operation of an expanded system of formal education.

The countries concerned already devote a much greater proportion of their national budgets to education than do the developed countries—on an average some 15 to 20 per cent as against some 10 to 15 per cent. Even if there were no question of population increase, existing educational budgets would have to be doubled or trebled at once in order to provide primary schooling for anything like every child in the world.

It is evident that this is simply not practicable. The difficulty is not merely financial. Schools have to be organized, built and staffed. Buildings might be improvised, but teachers cannot be produced by improvisation. They can only be obtained from the ranks of the relatively few people who, in the developing countries, have themselves had enough education to enter the teaching profession. Such people are naturally in great demand for other and usually less exacting and more remunerative or glamorous kinds of employment.

Those who are willing to teach have to be trained; training institutions have to be arranged for, and this takes time —as does the training itself. Meanwhile, the number of babies born continues to increase, and the number of infants who die continues to decrease. To add the final touch of gloom, one must recall that, in any case, a large proportion of the children taught will get no lasting benefit from their schooling and will quickly reinforce the ranks of the adult illiterates.

It is a losing battle, and the conclusion cannot be escaped that the world will be lucky if it can keep the numbers of adult illiterates from continuing to increase above the thousand million during the rest of the century, however much it may succeed in reducing the percentages of illiterates in the population. Must the battle be lost? I believe not, if the strategy and tactics can be radically changed before it becomes too late. But it is a very big "if".

It took the U.S.S.R. from twenty to forty years to break the back of its problem of illiteracy. It took forty-four years to raise the literacy rate in the Philippines from something like 5 per cent to something like 75 per cent; and at that rate it continues to stand. Since the number of adult illiterates remains fairly steady round about 4 million, the islands—after all the effort—still have to be classed as an "area of illiteracy".

But the world has not now got forty or even twenty years to indulge in the luxury of illiteracy. The information I have examined in the writing of this book has led me to the firm conviction that there can be no half measures in tackling this problem. Nothing short of an all-out effort to achieve 100 per cent literacy (or as near as may be) *everywhere and at once* is worth doing.

IT is true that any literacy campaign does at least benefit some, perhaps many individuals, and that is all to the good. If, however, it succeeds only in making a proportion of the population literate, experience shows that at a certain level, varying from country to country, progress slows down or stops altogether, so that the percentage of illiterates in the country concerned remains stable or decreases very slowly.

So long as that figure remains at, say, 25 per cent or more (and in several areas it is more like 75 per cent), the country is open to all the internal evils which result from "two nations" of first-class and second-class citizens; while in its external relations it continues to be at a disadvantage compared with countries in which illiteracy has ceased to exist to any significant extent. The dangers of perpetuating these divisions in the present explosive world situation do not need to be demonstrated.

Of course, universal literacy cannot in itself make the world better, richer or more peaceful: that depends upon people. Literacy is a tool, and what matters is how people use it. But it

(1) *World Illiteracy at Mid-Century.*

Small traders and artisans find it difficult to make ends meet in the large cities of Algeria. Algeria has a vast potential for industrial and agricultural expansion and is determined to transform its economy, but its efforts are hampered by widespread illiteracy. Literacy programmes launched with Unesco's help in two industrial zones and a rich agricultural area are helping to provide Algeria with the qualified manpower it vitally needs.

Photo Dominique Roger

does give people a chance which, without it, they do not have.

It is arguable that people would have been happier if they had been left to pursue a simple way of life outside the turmoil of the contemporary world; but the argument is pointless, because the contemporary world is one world and all the people are involved in it together, whether they like it or not. We have to accept that fact, and make terms with the world as it is.

If it is agreed that an all-out effort must be made, the first and basic need is to get clear the relationship between literacy and "education". However right in principle it may be to regard the eradication of illiteracy as an educational problem, the practical fact is that, in this case, the best is the enemy of the good.

Education involves much more than teaching people to read and write. That is the whole point. It is the "much more" which the world cannot afford. Learning to read and write, whether by an adult or by a child, is not in itself education. It is the acquisition of a skill. It is in the same category as learning to walk, to talk, to prepare food, to sow seeds, hoe a field, ride a bicycle or swim.

No one thinks of these things as education. They are skills which people need in order to live as human beings, and they are learned and taught within the circle of family or neighbourhood. Anyone who has learned them can teach others and does so as a matter of course, without any organized system.

SURELY it is evident that, if the politicians, planners and administrators would accept this view of the problem of illiteracy, an entirely new and simpler approach to its solution would at once become possible. By all means let educational programmes multiply and develop as fast as they can: no sensible person would wish to prejudice their progress. We are not here concerned, however, with those who can benefit from them. Our concern is with the millions of children who will never go to school and with the millions of adults who have never had the chance of going to school.

I yield to none in my respect for educationists and their work, but the fact that the problem of illiteracy has usually been considered as part of their department has tended to cloud the real issue. With the best intentions, the Teheran Congress on the Eradication of Illiteracy in 1965, and other authoritative bodies have urged the importance of not treating the eradication of illiteracy as an end in itself and of integrating it with programmes of child and adult education.

Nothing else was to be expected; yet I suggest that it is fundamentally wrong, in the practical situation in which the world is placed, to hold back the teaching of literacy while educational and social programmes are being developed. It is only by a complete reversal of traditional attitudes and by regarding the eradication of illiteracy not only as an end in itself, but as an end which must be attained at once and at all costs, that the world has any realistic hope of achieving it.

Indeed, it offers the only hope of ultimately securing the necessary expansion of the educational system proper, and of ensuring that the money poured into it is not, as at present, largely wasted.

It is surely self-evident that a community in which everyone can read and write—whether or not it has a developed educational system—is in a far better condition to maintain itself and improve its position in the circumstances of the modern world than

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'If the world wants its people to be literate, it can have that and the moon as well'

a community in which only a limited number of people are literate.

Once people are able to read and write, they can educate themselves, provided that they have access to the necessary literature; this is an absolute condition of success. Not all will be able or willing to take advantage of the opportunities which literacy opens up to them, but many will.

This is true of adults: it is even more true of the young. Moreover, the children who do go to school will not afterwards suffer the fate of those who return to an illiterate environment. Thus, the eradication of illiteracy will both make for greater general prosperity, enabling more to be spent on formal education, and also be a potent factor in progress towards the ideal of an educated society.

The target of concentrated effort must, therefore, be the establishment of a universal social custom by which all children, whether they go to school or not, will be taught to read and write as certainly and as naturally as they are taught to talk and walk.

Whenever adults are taught literacy, they must at the same time have it impressed on them that their first duty is to pass the skill on to their own families and children. For a literate parent to have illiterate children should be stigmatised as a social disgrace.

THIS will not, however, entirely solve the problem, since there are many communities in which there is no early prospect of even a majority of adults of the present generation becoming literate. In such cases, it will be necessary to extend the scope of literacy programmes to cover out-of-school children as well as adults.

But, if literacy is to be taken out of the purview of the education or "community development" authorities, who is to look after it? If I were prime minister of a developing country, I would create a Ministry of Literacy and give the minister full cabinet rank and no other responsibilities. I doubt if it could be done any other way for, of course, it involves spending a lot more money than has hitherto been thought of as the suitable allocation for literacy work, and the money will have to be fought for at the highest level.

In theory, it could be argued that the issue is so important that existing educational or other programmes should be cut back in its favour; but such a proposition would hardly be likely to receive general assent. It is more practical and more in the interests of the developing countries to assume that the cost of expanding literacy teaching for children and adults will need funds over and above existing budgets. What, then, would be involved?

The whole basis of the approach now suggested is that literacy instruction needs no special expertise or professional qualification. Anyone of average ability and intelligence can be trained to do it, and, once it ceases to be mixed up with other educational and social activities, it can be entrusted in the main to parents, relatives and public-spirited volunteers. Paid staff will be needed only for organization and administration.

Primers, teaching aids and reading matter at various levels will be essential, and this will be the chief item of expense; but for the most part it will only involve making larger printings of material already prepared in connexion with school or adult education programmes.

It will be recollected that, in 1963, Unesco estimated that it would cost about £700 million to make 330 million adults literate in ten years. If we double this to bring in the children, and add half as much again to the total to cover rising costs, a figure of £2,000 million may be taken to represent the rough overall cost of eradicating illiteracy.

Though this is only a guess, I suggest that it may fairly be accepted as a reasonable estimate of the money required. £2,000 million is a huge sum, but it does not look so large if it is considered as £200 million a year for ten years. In the 1963 estimate, it was calculated that the developing countries themselves could produce 75 per cent—about £500 million—of the £700 million needed.

One of the reasons why it was not practicable to proceed with the 1963 scheme was that those countries found it difficult to see their way to providing so high a proportion of the cost from their own resources. Nevertheless, it is fair to assume, for present purposes, that they should be able to find an average of £50 million a year, bringing the amount needed to be provided by the world collectively down to £150 million a year.

CONTRIBUTIONS towards this large sum which could be made by charitables sources might be quite substantial. Most fund-raising projects in this context have so far been initiated by religious bodies and mainly supported by members of churches. An appeal made on broad grounds of humanity and the public interest might well, if efficiently conducted, succeed in attracting a considerable response in the more affluent countries from people who are indifferent or even hostile to avowedly religious causes.

Even so, the bulk of the money would certainly have to come from government sources under international or bilateral aid schemes. It may be said that this is asking for the moon; it is precisely that. "Whether we reach the moon is quite unimportant in comparison to the question whether we will help human beings to live, and to live as human beings are meant to live", says Dr Visser 't Hooft, former Secretary of the World Council of Churches.

I do not know, any more than any other member of the public, how much the world collectively is spending annually on space research and travel, let alone on producing weapons of destruction which would defeat their own object if ever used. One must guard against the dangers of over-simplification, of course, and it would be naïve to suppose that the great powers are at all likely to reduce their space and defence programmes in order to promote universal literacy, however sensible they would show themselves to be in doing so.

Yet there is really no need to pose these as alternatives. In the scale of public expenditure by the affluent nations, the cost of eradicating illiteracy, if shared among them, would be trivial. If the world wants its people to be literate, it can have that and the moon as well. Moreover, it is an important consideration that, if the job is once

Photo Unesco • Dominique Roger

The Senate Building in Teheran where the World Congress of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy, organized by Unesco, met from September 8 to 19, 1965. Representatives of 88 countries adopted the strategy from which the present Experimental Literacy Programmes have developed. September 8 is now celebrated each year as International Literacy Day, to mark the anniversary of the historic meeting in Teheran.

thoroughly done, it will never have to be done again. The expenditure will not be recurrent.

It is beyond question that the establishment of universal illiteracy would enormously increase the human resources available for scientific and intellectual as well as economic progress. It would greatly improve the prospect of finding solutions to the problems arising from the growth in the world population. It might even affect that growth, for the undoubted statistical connexion between population increase and low standard of living may also indicate a connexion with a high rate of illiteracy.

At any rate, it is a fact—coincidental or not—that, leaving out of account changes in population due to migration, the rise in numbers in countries with a low illiteracy rate tends to be appreciably slower than in those with a high illiteracy rate.

The Teheran Conference of 1965, "convinced that the struggle against illiteracy, aimed at the total eradication from our planet of the scourge of ignorance, is a moral imperative for our generation," concluded its recommendations with:

A SOLEMN AND URGENT APPEAL

To the United Nations, its Specialized Agencies and, in the first place to Unesco;
to regional bodies concerned with development in general and education in particular;
to non-governmental organizations which include assistance, direct or indirect, to education in their operational programmes;
to religious, social and cultural institutions;
to national and international foundations, both public and private;
to educators, scientists and scholars, to economic and trade union leaders, and to all men of goodwill:

to do everything in their power to arouse public opinion with a view to intensifying and accelerating the world-wide attack on illiteracy; and in particular to exert their influence on all responsible leaders:

- to ensure that literacy work is an integral and essential part of every development plan in countries where illiteracy is rife;
- to increase, so far as may be practicable and appropriate, the national and international resources set aside for the fight against illiteracy;
- to make possible the provision of additional resources for development in general and for literacy work in particular as and when further funds become available through a reduction of military expenditures or for other reasons;
- to harness to the full all available information media for propagating the new concept of adult literacy;
- to ensure that priority in the allocation of available resources is accorded to the fight against the great human afflictions that constitute a major threat to peace, namely hunger, disease and ignorance, among which illiteracy occupies a place of key importance.

"To arouse public opinion"... that is the root of the matter. This is supposed to be the age of democracy, the century of the common man. Yet —such is the fantastic paradox of the times—it is notorious that, in the great public matters which most nearly affect his life and welfare, the common man too often finds himself inexorably involved in programmes and policies for which he must labour, pay and die, but to which he is personally indifferent or positively opposed.

THE will of the people cannot prevail unless it is founded on knowledge, clearly stated and effectively communicated. An illiterate people has neither access to knowledge nor ability to formulate its wishes and express them in the places where decisions are taken.

If the common peoples of the world once realize what they are needlessly losing through the handicap of illiteracy, they will demand that, in the words of the Conference report, "like all other forms of bondage, illiteracy—the enslaving of the mind—must be abolished".

If they once realize that, if only the authorities will take the trouble, it *can* be abolished, once and for all, within a reasonable time and at relatively moderate cost, they will demand immediate, resolute and effective action, and be ready to provide the necessary money and manpower.

International Year for Human Rights

MESSAGE FROM RENÉ MAHEU

Director-General of Unesco

THE Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 20th anniversary of which is being celebrated this year as International Human Rights Year, is the first code of ethics adopted for all mankind. Our modern world, marked by constant changes in living standards and in its very structure, yearns for order and unity in face of the ominous forces and dangers that threaten us on this checkerboard planet of progress and poverty.

The international community is no longer a circumscribed society; it has become universal. Vast numbers of peoples, differing greatly in origin, traditions, religion, philosophy, culture, historical development and economic systems have attained independence, have entered on to the political scene, and are now sharing in the elaboration of the moral code and law of our time. The 1948 Declaration is in accord with this fundamental transformation which it foreshadowed.

The constitutions and laws enacted by the authorities of different nations define the rights and the duties of their own citizens. Religious and philosophical doctrines find their following mainly among the devout and the faithful. But the Universal Declaration is meant for all mankind and proclaims the equal dignity of all human beings.

Its Articles provide that every person, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, means, birth or status, is entitled to all the rights and all the freedoms which are set forth therein, and which should enable every person to live, to think, to express himself, to act, to create, to enjoy and to forge with others the future of all.

A code of ethics that seeks to inspire men's actions in a changing world, and to engage individuals and States of widely differing cultures, cannot advocate any specific belief other than the inalienable right of every person to his own freedom. But the practical exercise of freedom that is conscious of its own dignity and responsible for the dignity of others presupposes the fulfilment of certain conditions. That is why the Universal Declaration sets out a number of specific rights of man.

First and foremost every individual should be free from the constraints of force, and at the same time his most elementary needs must be satisfied. It follows that every person has the right to a standard of living adequate to the health and well-being of himself and his family. He also has the right to benefit from the general progress brought about by scientific and technological development, and himself to contribute to this progress. But the practical exercise of conscious and responsible freedom also presupposes that every individual has had an opportunity of acquiring, to the best of his abilities, the intellectual and cultural training and the knowledge necessary to understand the world around him. He therefore has a right to an education which enables him to develop his personality and to participate, both in his work and by his exercise of choice, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of his community, and in the decisions which govern their evolution.

A Universal Declaration is both weaker and stronger than a national juridical text. It defines and specifies the duties of all men, and virtually places the actions of all countries and statesmen before the court of world public opinion. By defining the specific rights of each individual the Declaration strengthens the restraining force of world public opinion and acts as a deterrent to those who would flout it. The Declaration's effectiveness depends very largely on the real existence and the strength of that common conscience which has slowly matured through the long years of man's history, and which must be encouraged in the minds of all by making each individual aware of his fellowship with all mankind.

In a world where vast areas are still in the grip of hunger and malnutrition, and where more than 700,000,000 illiterate persons are shut out from the world of ideas mirrored in the written word, there are many people for whom the provisions of the Universal Declaration are still nothing more than empty promises. But the tremendous resources of science and technology now make it possible for those promises to be fulfilled. Poverty, hunger and ignorance are no longer inevitable. It is our duty to overcome them by making education, science and culture available to all as the essential pre-requisite for the progress of society and the full development of the human personality.

This is the plane on which Unesco is making its contribution to the work begun by the United Nations.

Even those of Unesco's activities which are not directly concerned with promoting respect for human rights in general or certain specific rights, do nevertheless help to create the material, intellectual, moral and cultural conditions indispensable for lifting these rights from the level of principles to that of living realities for all mankind.

It is my fervent hope that the International Conference on Human Rights which opens this month in Teheran, under the auspices of the United Nations, will prove to be the occasion for the world to assert with greater clarity and unity its determination to achieve increasing respect for the full dignity of the individual and the ultimate mastery of man over his destiny.

Letters to the Editor

MOST NORTHERLY METROPOLIS

Sir,

Your issue "U.S.S.R.Today" (Nov. 1967) states that Leningrad is the northernmost large city of the world. This statement was also made by our courier when I was visiting Leningrad this last summer.

Actually, Oslo, Norway's capital, is on the same latitude and Finland's Helsinki is slightly further north. It appears to be one of those Russian misconceptions that nobody challenges.

Lois Hemming
Manningtree, U.K.

The latitudes and populations of the three cities are: Helsinki (60° 9' 42"; 485,000), Leningrad (59° 56' 32"; over 3 million), Oslo (59° 54' 43"; 520,000). —Editor.

U.S.S.R. TODAY

Sir,

I enjoyed reading the issue on the U.S.S.R. whose citizens have applied their courage and capacity for organization to the development of their country. They have demonstrated with what ardour and determination individual men and women can work together to build a new nation and thus help to achieve great results.

Certain of the views expressed by these teen-agers (15 and 16 years) were nevertheless rather pessimistic as to the future of our world. Some were convinced, for example, that having failed to make proper use of atomic energy, mankind would end up by destroying itself. In the present state of affairs, there are indeed good reasons for fearing that that day is no longer far distant.

But the majority of these young people did agree on one thing: that science has conferred on us the status of gods before we have even demonstrated our worth as human beings.

Is it too late to hope, as Paul Couderc writes in the same issue, that "the triumph of science must ultimately engender peace by endowing all mankind with better means of livelihood, more leisure, more culture and greater reasoning powers"? I do not think so.

Progress put an end to the age of the cave-dwellers; why should it not put an end to the age of the barrack-dwellers?

That is why I sincerely endorse the hopes expressed by Maria-Cristina Costa Diaz with whom, if you will put me in touch, I would be happy to correspond in English, French or German. May I say how much I admire the "Unesco Courier" and how closely I follow its efforts.

Patrick Deyris
Marly-le-Roi, France

Martine Louvet
Lons-le-Saunier, France

RECLAIMING BARREN LANDS

Sir,

Your article, "A New Form of Aid for Development", concerning the World Food Programme (Oct. 1967) calls attention to a problem of the very first magnitude which at times seems hopeless to solve. It is heartening, however, to know that there is an answer, and this is clearly outlined in the recent book "Sahara Conquest" by Richard St. Barbe Baker (Lutterworth Press, London, 1966). He has proved it is possible to halt the already advancing deserts, to stem the floods in eroded areas, and to reclaim barren land by correct methods of sylviculture coupled with certain modern techniques.

D. Dyke
Binstead, Isle of Wight, U.K.

THE WORLD WE HOPE FOR

I read "The World We Hope For" by Maria-Cristina Costa Diaz (Feb. 1968) with particular interest because it corresponds exactly to the results of an opinion poll I carried out among fellow students (French and other nationalities) in the International Lycée at St. Germain-en-Laye, near Paris.

APOLOGISTS OF APARTHEID

Sir,

Congratulations on the article, "Racism under the Mask" by John Rex (Jan. 1968). As for the correspondent who forbad his daughter to renew her subscription because of your issue on Apartheid (March 1967), his action deserves the strongest condemnation. It is deplorable to find that some people are still ready to vindicate such a shameful idea. And do we need to act like despots towards our children and arbitrarily impose our own opinions on them?

Mounir Hamidou
Tlemcen, Algeria

Sir,

My reaction to the letter headed "No comment" (January 1968) is one of deep indignation. How can anyone use the term "sons of cannibals" after seeing the look of sad entreaty and the expression of tenderness and dignity in the eyes of the Negro father holding his sick child in his arms (photo page 13).

I hope that one day, soon, thanks to Unesco and to the efforts of all men of goodwill, there will be less misery in the developing countries, and that the whites of South Africa (and elsewhere, alas!) will realize their error and condemn the policy of Apartheid.

N. Roudet
Clermont-Ferrand, France

INCANDESCENT 'TIDAL WAVES'

Sir,

Haroun Tazieff's article "The Menace of 'Extinct' Volcances" (Oct. 1967) was informative and interesting. I was intrigued by the caption for a photograph of Alaska's Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, which stated, "Though such incandescent 'tidal waves' were once common, only one has occurred in historic times." I should like to quote from *Introduction to Physical Geology* by Chester R. Longwell and Richard F. Flint. The excerpts come under the heading "nuées ardentes", and refer to the eruption of Mt. Pelée on the island of Martinique in 1902.

"With each burst, a great cloud of superheated vapor and incandescent rock material rushed forth and flowed down the mountain slope at estimated speeds as high as two miles per minute..."

"All buildings and all but two of the 28,000 people in the town were destroyed; one of the fortunate survivors was a prisoner in a dungeon..."

"Ten years after the great outbreak at Pelée, Mount Katmai, on the Alaskan Peninsula, erupted in similar fashion and on a much larger scale..."

It would seem as though we have had at least a second "tidal wave" in historic times.

Steven M. Aronoff
Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A.

POSITIVE PEACEMAKING

Sir,

In such an excellent issue as "War or Peace" (Aug.-Sept. 1967), I was disappointed not to see a reference to the Pacifist movement which has consistently claimed to have the answer to many of the problems discussed.

Unesco's Constitutional Preamble, "That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed", indicates clearly the futility of disarmament conferences. Pacifists believe in *unilateral* action—positive peacemaking by refusing all violence, irrespective of all methods employed by the "enemy". Since all violence, whether called defensive or not, engenders violent reactions, pacifists see no solution in so-called "police" warfare. The doctrine of the "Just War" is dead.

Unfortunately those who want to survive aggression have so little faith in the indestructibility of their beliefs that they insist in trying to "defend" them by force.

Pointing to the evils of nuclear war—even the immorality of sanctioning it—is not enough. We must also have faith in non-violent defence. Only then will wars cease.

Ronald Barnes
Bridgewater, U.K.

From the Unesco Newsroom...

Unesco art slides on painting and sculpture

The first sets of a new collection of art slides, "Paintings and Sculpture", prepared by Unesco and Editions Rencontre, Paris, were issued recently. They deal with Egyptian sculptures, Modigliani and Etruscan sculptures. Further sets—on Toulouse-Lautrec, Henry Moore, Goya, Picasso, the Arts of West and Central Africa, Vermeer, Miro and Renoir—are due to appear every two months. Each set comprises 24 colour slides with explanatory notes in English, French, German and Spanish. Price in France: Frs. 32 (general public), Frs. 27 (teachers and institutions). Equivalent in foreign currencies, not exceeding $10.00. For further information, write to: Editions Rencontre, Service B, 4, Rue Madame, Paris 6e.

Faster flying, fewer deaths

While scheduled air traffic increased from 5,000 million passenger miles in 1945 to 142,000 million in 1966, the number of people killed in aviation accidents fell from 3.53 to 0.64 for every hundred million passenger miles. Maximum cruising speeds increased from 170 to 600 m.p.h. In 1945 one scheduled flight crossed the Atlantic every two hours; in 1966 there were seven scheduled flights an hour.

SCIENCE BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS

A first-rate review of books about science for younger readers published in English during 1967 is presented in the December 1967 issue of the American monthly *Scientific American* (75 cents). Subjects covered are astronomy, physics, geology, mathematics, animals and plants, man in the past, technology, exploration and adventure. Each book is carefully and succinctly analysed by Philip and Phylis Morrison, who prepare the book review section of the *Scientific American* each month. The following titles are selected from their listing:

Observing Earth Satellites, by Desmond King-Hele. (St. Martin's Press, Inc.; $7.)

Red Giants and White Dwarfs: The Evolution of Stars, Planets and Life, by Robert Jastrow. (Harper & Row, Publishers; $5.95.) "A book that almost any teen-ager can enjoy and profit from."

What Does the Tide Do?, by Jean Kinney. Illustrated by Cle Kinney. (Young Scott Books; $3.95.) "A first-rate introduction to science and thinking about how the world works."

Basic: An Introduction to Computer Programming Using the Basic Language, by William F. Sharpe. (The Free Press; $3.95.) "A serious start at computation, accessible to just about every interested reader past the sixth grade."

So Excellent a Fishe: A Natural History of Sea Turtles, by Archie Carr. (The Natural History Press; $5.95.)

The World of the Polar Bear, by Richard Perry. (University of Washington Press; $5.95.) "A solid and meaty book for interested readers 15 and up."

The Life of the Kangaroo, by Stanley and Kay Breeden. (Taplinger Publishing Co. Inc.; $4.95.) "A first-rate example of modern natural history, looking at one endearing species in some depth but wholly without technical barriers."

Gilgamesh: Man's First Story, written and illustrated by Bernada Bryson. (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.; $4.95.)

He Who Saw Everything: The Epic of Gilgamesh, retold by Anita Feagles. Illustrated by Xavier Gonzales. (William R. Scott, Inc.; $4.50.) "A story... no worse for 5,000 years of aging... Two beautiful and fascinating books for both children and their parents."

The Alchemists: Fathers of Practical Chemistry, by Richard Cummings. Illustrated by Yuko Tashiro (David McKay Co. Inc.; $3.50.) "A simple and attractive retelling done in the form of brief biographies of nine famous alchemists, from Bolos Democritos of Alexandria to the last practitioner, poor James Price, who died in 1785... Chinese and Arab traditions are properly represented."

The Morning of Mankind: Prehistoric Man in Europe, by Robert Silverberg. (New York Graphic Society Ltd.; $4.95.)

Kites: An Historical Survey, by Clive Hart. (Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., Publishers; $12.50.) "The first good history of the kite... a labour of love by an Australian scholar... An account so expert, so complete, so lively that it deserves young readers, who may come to hold it as their earliest model of what a good monograph can be."

The Africans Knew, by Tillie S. Pine and Joseph Levine. Pictures by Ann Grifalconi. (McGraw Hill Book Co.; $3.50.) "How people made things in old Africa and how they are done today."

The Oceans: A Treasury of the Sea World, edited by Seon Manley and Gogo Lewis (Doubleday & Company Inc.; $3.95.) "An anthology of wide range."

Crossroad Puzzlers, by David Webster. (The Natural History Press $3.50.) "A book of a new sort. Contains about 150 photographs of the highway landscape: signs, dented cars, long-legged trucks, skid marks and much more. Each picture is captioned with a sharp question. Altogether a work of an original and expert kind, the very ground matter of science."

Who has most telephones?

The U.S.A. has more telephones per 100 population (49.87) than any other country. Runners-up in telephone density are Sweden (47.90), New Zealand (39.87), Canada (38.91), Denmark (29.09), Australia (25.81), Norway (25.09) and U.K. (20.70.) Among the world's major cities, Washington D.C. has 94.7 telephones per 100 inhabitants, followed by Stockholm (77.5) and San Francisco (77.4).

First fish protein factory

The world's first factory producing fish protein concentrate industrially has opened in the fishing village of Bua on the west coast of Sweden. A grey powder, odourless and tasteless, consisting of 83 per cent full-value protein and 13 per cent mineral substances, the concentrate is at present used for animal feed. However, the factory can easily be adapted to produce a concentrate for human consumption—an important possible source of proteins for countries with food deficiencies.

Charting poverty

"Charting poverty"—a series of four wallcharts intended primarily for use in schools—indicates the extent of poverty in the world by showing graphically areas of malnutrition, low life expectancy, illiteracy and population increase. The series is produced by Educational Productions Limited (Wakefield, Yorkshire, U.K.) in collaboration with Christian Aid and Oxfam.

New Radar 'eye' for the weathermen

Instruments developed by the Institute of Marine Sciences at the University of Miami (United States) enable weather observers for the first time to identify and evaluate distant electrical storms. The instruments are used in conjunction with conventional weather radar which, although capable of indicating areas of rain, does not identify active thunderstorms.

Dr. M.G. Candau

The name of Dr. M.G. Candau, Director-General of the World Health Organization, was spelt incorrectly in the English language edition of our March 1968 number. The "Unesco Courier" expresses its regret for this typographical error.

Flashes...

■ *The Council of Europe is launching a Clean Water campaign this year and a Nature Conservancy Year in 1970.*

■ *Sweden has offered to put an emergency force of 50 engineers and technicians at the disposal of the U.N. for service in areas stricken by natural disasters.*

■ *The world's largest optical telescope with a 236-inch lens is being built in the U.S.S.R.*

■ *Lessons by radio and television have brought literacy to one million people in Mexico, reports the Centre of Experimental Audiovisual Education in Mexico City.*

Imp. GEORGES LANG, PARIS. IMPRIME EN FRANCE. — Dépôt légal: 2e trimestre 1968 - C 1

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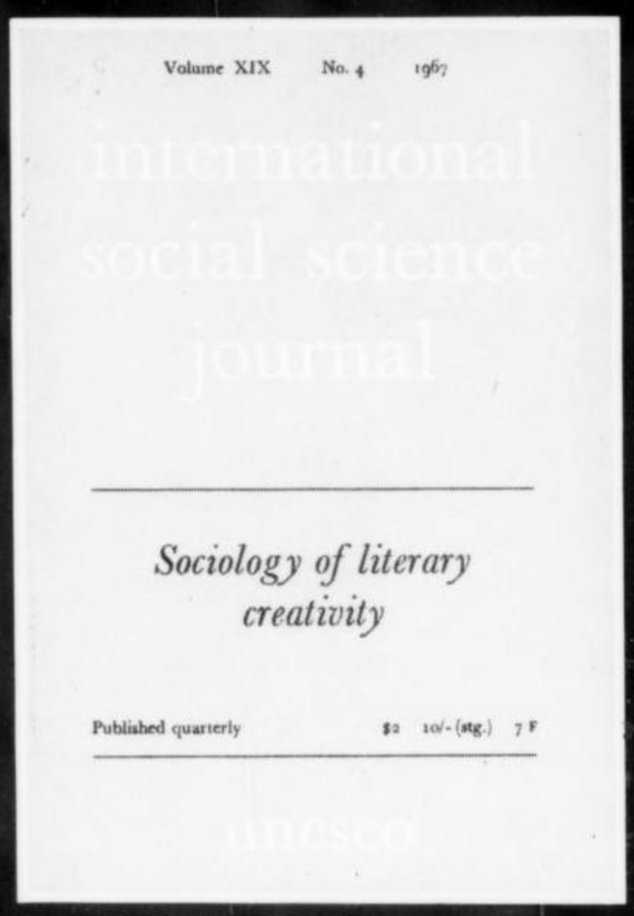
through its various periodicals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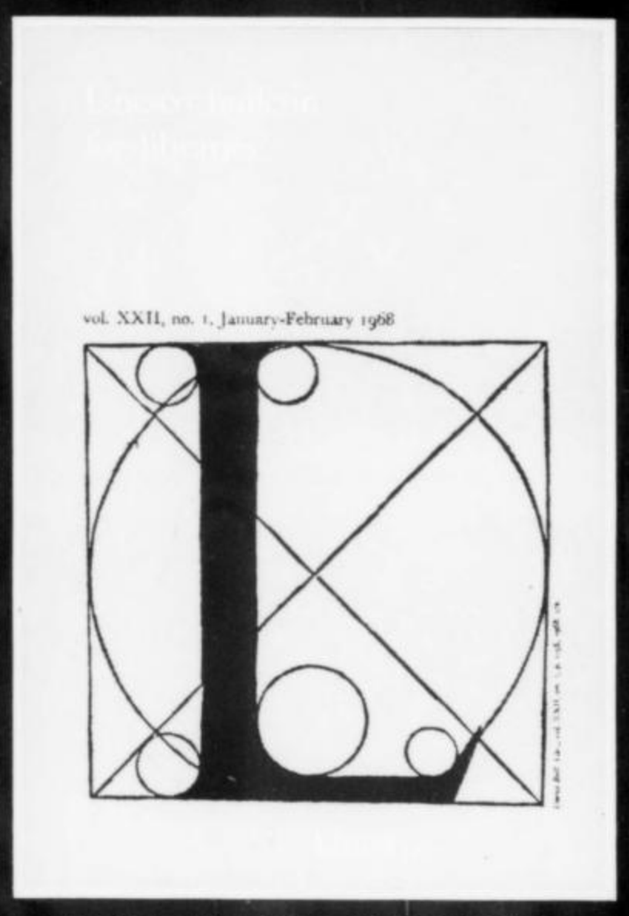

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An invaluable international publication of library news from all over the world for the use of libraries, scientific institutes and universities. Contains listings of exchanges.

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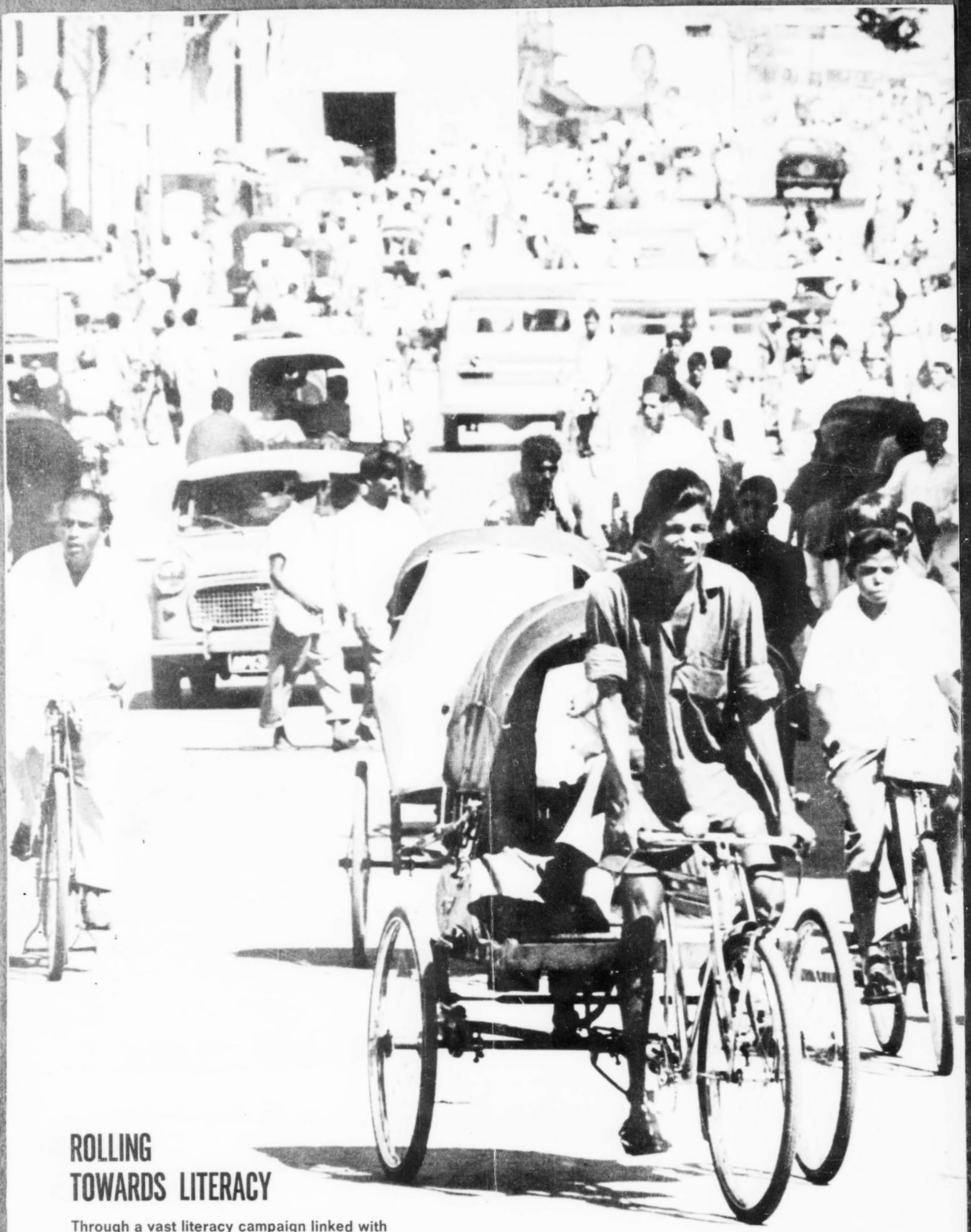

ROLLING TOWARDS LITERACY

Through a vast literacy campaign linked with its plans for economic development, India aims to make 750,000 adults literate within five years. Photo shows busy street scene in an Indian city.

Photo ILO